

ROYAL PROGRESS



1 Royal Windsor. From a Print published in 1865

ROYAL PROGRESS

*One Hundred Years
of British Monarchy*

By
HECTOR BOLITHO

8

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By the Same Author

ALBERT THE GOOD. A BIOGRAPHY OF THE PRINCE CONSORT
VICTORIA THE WIDOW, AND HER SON
THE PRINCE CONSORT AND HIS BROTHER
OLDER PEOPLE. A BOOK OF REMINISCENCES
THE LIFE AND REIGN OF KING EDWARD VIII, ETC., ETC.

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In Memory of
MICHAEL

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE greater portion of *Royal Progress* appears in book form for the first time. A few short passages in the story of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert are taken from my book, *Albert the Good*, and they are used with the gracious permission of Messrs. Cobden Sanderson and Messrs. Appleton Century. Three or four scenes in the story of Queen Victoria's widowhood are reprinted from my book, *Victoria the Widow, and Her Son*, also published by Messrs. Cobden Sanderson in England and by Messrs. Appleton Century in the United States of America.

H. B.

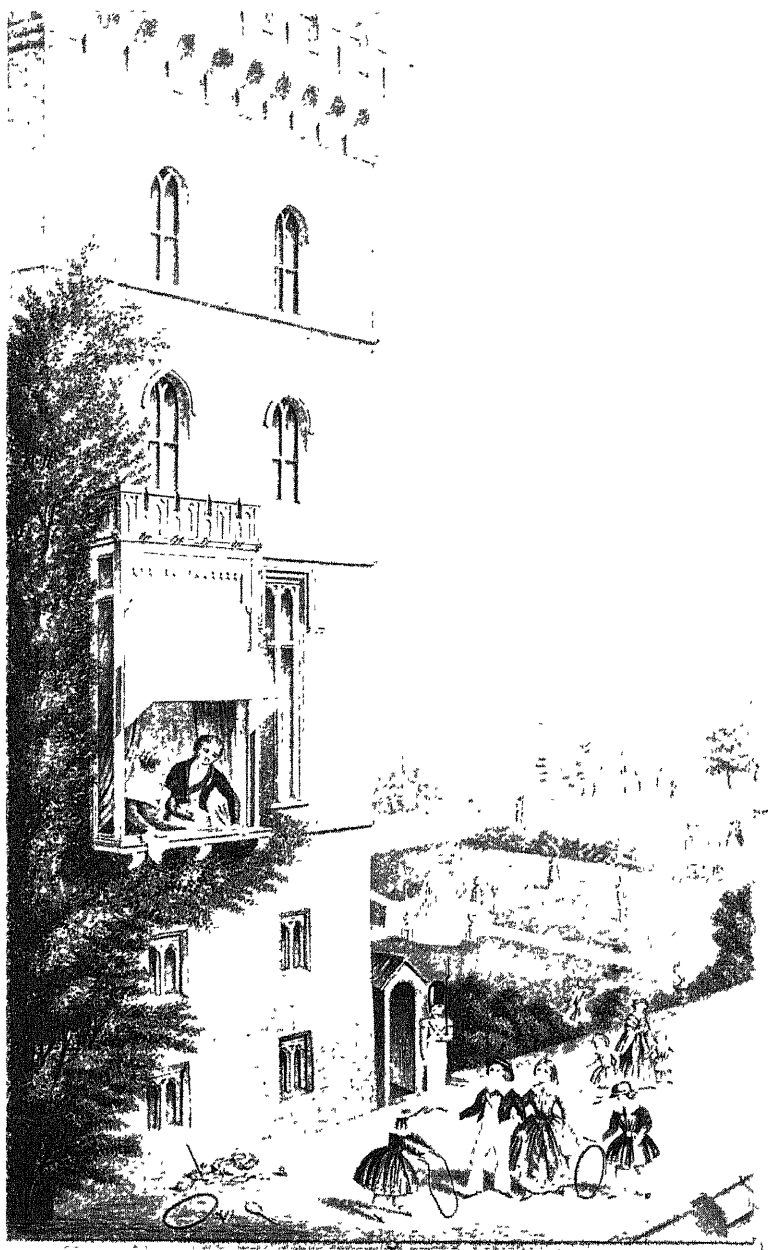
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE pictures on Figs. 9, 12, 14, 17, and 49 are included in this volume by gracious permission of His Majesty the King; that on Fig. 24 by gracious permission of H.R.H. Princess Helena Victoria, and that on Fig. 18 by permission of the Earl of Harewood, K.G. Many of the early prints are from the valuable and interesting collection of Messrs. W. T. Spencer, of New Oxford Street, London, who have with great kindness placed it at the publishers' disposal for purposes of reproduction, while others are from the collections of the Author and of the publishers themselves. We are indebted to Messrs. Cobden Sanderson for the colour subjects on Figs. 21, 29, 55 and 63, and to the Leger Galleries for the subject on Fig. 50. The unique early photograph of the Duchess of Kent on Fig. 23 is reproduced from a family album in the possession of Captain E. G. Fairholme.

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CONTENTS

PART	PAGE
AUTHOR'S NOTE	VI
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	VII
I. QUEEN VICTORIA AND THE PRINCE CONSORT .	I
II. QUEEN VICTORIA AND HER MINISTERS . . .	23
III. QUEEN VICTORIA, KING EDWARD VII AND KING GEORGE V	35
IV. KING GEORGE V AND KING EDWARD VIII .	51
V. KING GEORGE V AND KING GEORGE VI . .	89
INDEX	115



2 The Royal Family at Windsor. 1850.



3 Prince Albert at the time of his Marriage

PART I

*QUEEN VICTORIA AND THE
PRINCE CONSORT*

1836

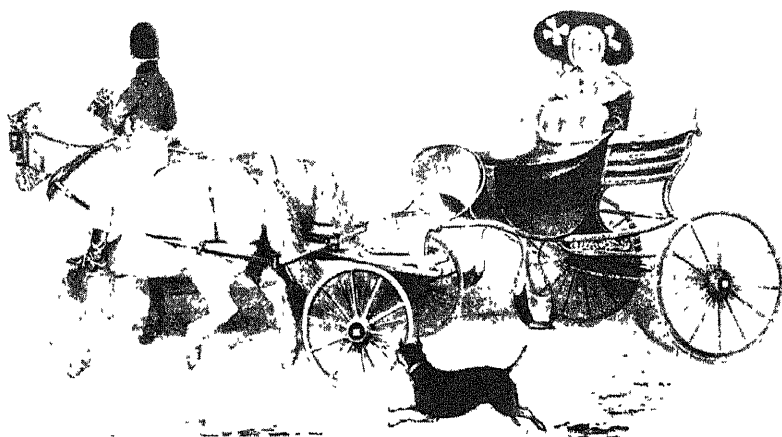
IN June of 1836, a precise young German prince stepped upon a river boat which carried him from the heart of Europe towards the sea. The orderliness of his mind and the scrupulousness of his character were revealed in the energy with which he walked up and down, looking out to the changing scenes of the Rhine. In those days, there were not so many stinking chimneys and squat manufactories to mar the undulating banks of the river. As the Prince leaned against the rail of the boat, he could look upon a succession of placid vistas, each one dominated by the gaunt turrets of a castle rising from thick trees, much as his own little castle rose from the edge of the Thuringian forest. The dreams which he had spun at Rosenau were over. The heavy Coburg farm women, in their blue blouses, were still working monotonously in his father's fields. The swallows still came from the north, to fly over the fortress in which Luther had mumbled his prayers. The roses among which Napoleon had walked—the beauty and the contentment and the sweet freedom from ambition—all these were now ended. If Prince Albert dreamed and sighed at all, as he watched the turrets and walls of the castles of the Rhine, he did not indulge himself for very long. He braced his shoulders and he took his grammar book out of his pocket. He had been told that the English favoured their own tongue and that it would be neither fashionable nor wise to speak German to the strangers among whom he was to make his home. He sought out a passenger with whom he could exchange his English. All that Baron Stockmar had told him was to be remembered. Life was to be made up of ethics and

morality, learning and duty, with enough piety to add the last burden of dullness to his days. But these virtues were strong in him; so strong that they were to change the character of a family and submerge most of the alarming traits of the Hanoverians for ever.

The Princess who waited for him in England was of a different pattern. She liked dancing until the first streaks of daylight crept over the gardens, and even her mother's stern discipline had not quelled her love of fun. The sprigs of holly which had been pinned beneath her chin, to prick her and check her spontaneity, had been of no avail. Princess Victoria was as devoted to pleasure as any of her wicked uncles. It was only because she was to fall in love, blindly and constantly, that she was to change and accept the laws of her husband's frightening conscience.

When Prince Albert arrived at Kensington Palace, his looks and his music and his little jokes captivated his cousin from the first day. She thought him "very amiable, very kind and good, and extremely merry." They danced together and they walked together, and sometimes they sat upon a sofa, to turn over the pages of books of drawings. They played upon a pianoforte, and as Princess Victoria looked up from the keyboard, she noticed that Albert was "extremely handsome." Her happiness and her decision came quickly. She turned to ecstasy when she wrote to her uncle in Belgium. She was "delighted," she said. "I have only now to beg you, my dearest Uncle, to take care of the health of one now so dear to me, and to take him under your special protection."

Princess Victoria "cried bitterly, very bitterly," when Albert left her once more, with his laws of duty fulfilled, but his heart untouched. He thought his eager cousin to be no more than "very amiable," and he contemplated the plan for his marriage with the same cold obedience as he had studied his philosophy and his botany, his geology and his Euclid.



4 Princess Victoria in her Pony Phaeton



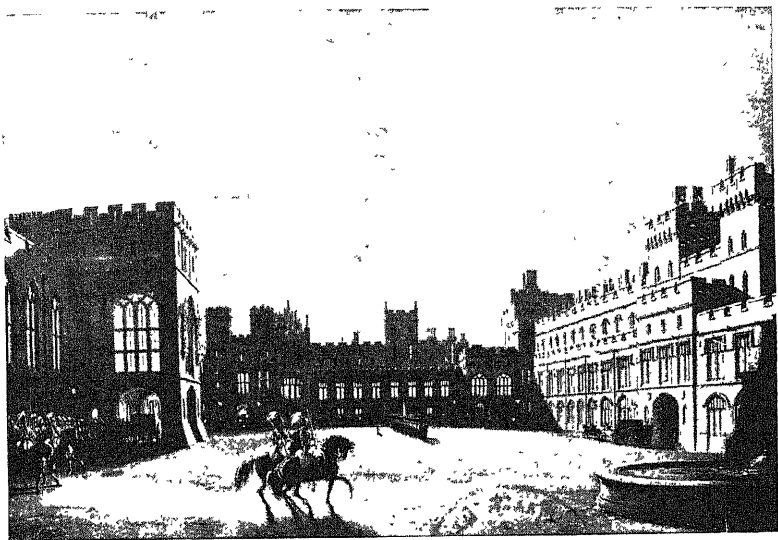
5 Kensington Palace



6 Coburg: the Castle and Town



7 Schloss Rosenau, Coburg: Prince Albert's Birthplace

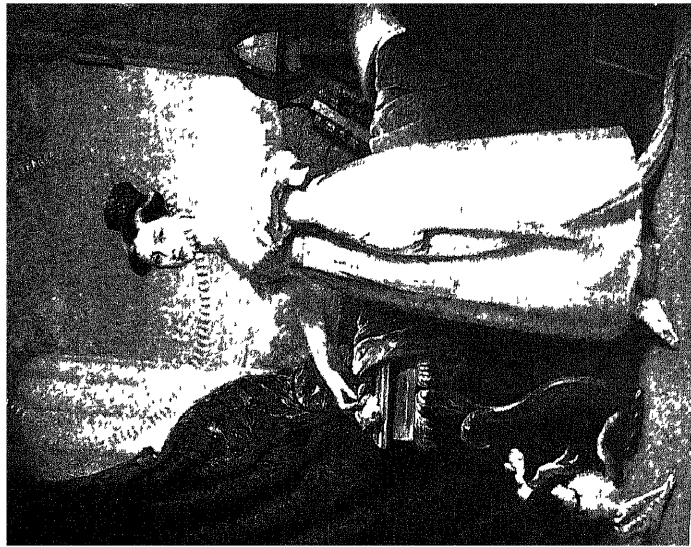


8 The Upper Ward of Windsor Castle. From a Lithograph by Joseph Nash



9 Queen Victoria riding with Lord Melbourne. From a Painting by Sir Francis Grant, P.R.A.

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10 Princess Victoria: after a painting by
Sir George Hayter



11 The Duchess of Kent in 1841

1837-1839

In June of 1837, Victoria became Queen of England. At last she was free! The schooling, the scoldings, and the correcting holly prickles were all over and, in the first realization of her independence, the young Queen turned against every restraint under which she had suffered. She gently brushed her mother aside, and in her joy over her freedom, she suspected every attempt to bind her by fresh ties. Perhaps marriage would be a mistake! The young, romantic affection of a few years before assumed fearful possibilities for her now. She knew that she was safe with her "dearly beloved, angelic Lehzen," her "excellent Lord Melbourne" and the Duke of Wellington, who was "very dear and nice" to her. They gave her the strength and encouragement which she wished. She did not need Albert now, it seemed. The scene at the pianoforte was forgotten; the admiration and the tears. "I may not have the *feeling* for him which is requisite to ensure happiness," she wrote. "I *may* like him as a friend, and as a *cousin*, and as a *brother*, but not *more*; and should this be the case (which is unlikely) I am *very* anxious that it should be understood that I am *not* guilty of any breach of promise, for *I never gave any*."

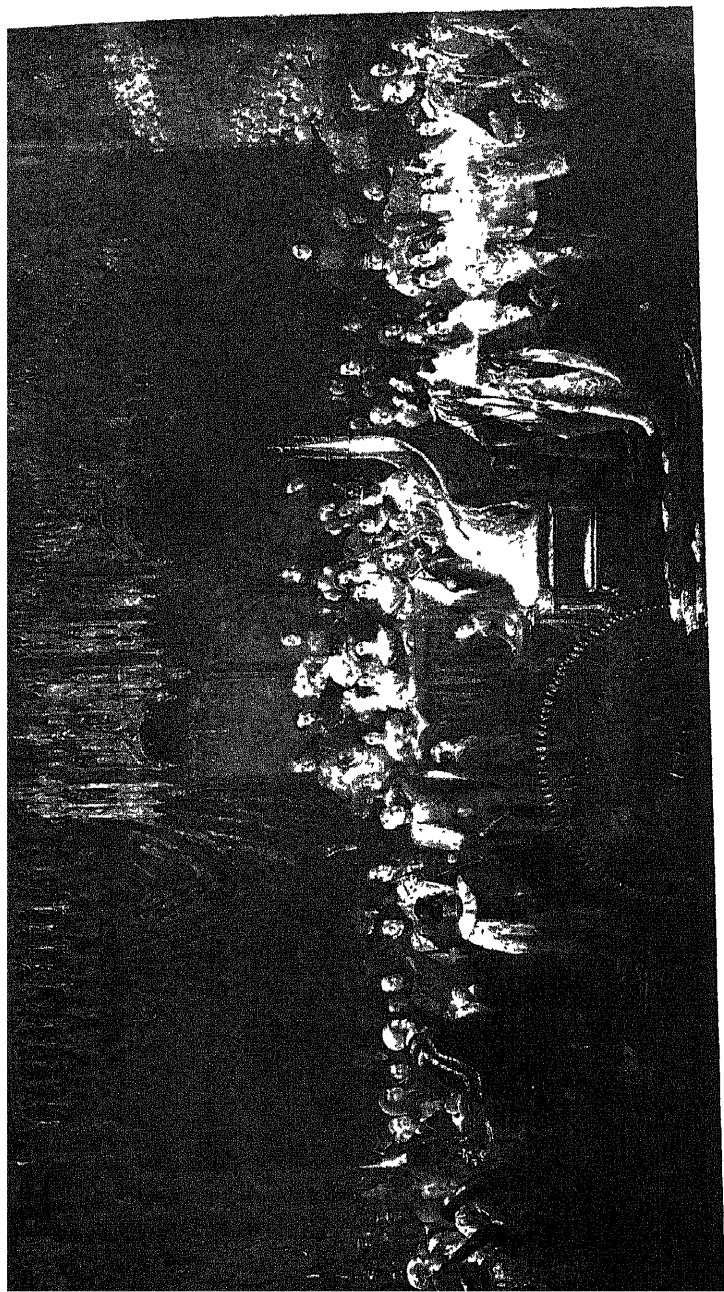
It is no wonder that when Prince Albert came to England again, he travelled in gloom. His pride was tantalised and he clung more and more to the simple life of Coburg, and to his friends. Even the merit of amiability, which he had admitted in Victoria, faded for him when he learned that she had a "*great* repugnance to change." He prepared for his journey reluctantly, embracing every little sentimental tie with his brother, hoarding his letters and sighing over the emptiness of his future.

The next scene was at Windsor, in the golden autumn, when the leaves of the chestnuts blew down the slope towards Queen Adelaide's cottage and the scarlet leaves of the Virginia creeper fell from the Round Tower, revealing the bare face of dull grey stone. The tension

of this fresh meeting was eased by one small, human accident. Albert's clothes had been delayed on the way so that he could not dine with the Queen and her Court. He might have been still deeper in melancholy as he ate his lonely meal, imagining that the Queen might be with Lord Melbourne in the dining-room, planning his fate with as much technique as they might have talked over the framing of a parliamentary bill. When he joined her after dinner, there was a little relief from the courtly strain. Victoria watched him as he walked about the room and, an hour afterwards, she revealed all that she felt upon seeing him, in her diary. "It was with some emotion that I beheld Albert, who is beautiful," she wrote. Her Minister was also staying at Windsor, to whisper his tactful encouragements. Lord Melbourne leaned over her once, as Prince Albert was standing near by, and he said that he was struck by the Prince's likeness to her.

In the days that followed, they rode through the glades of Windsor forest and they played together upon the pianoforte, after dinner. Victoria was in love once more, but when she was alone in her room, she wrestled with her heart, in favour of her independence. It was not until October 14th that her heart won the contest. A little before luncheon she was in her sitting-room. She sent an old Coburg servant to bring Prince Albert to her. He had been out, riding, and his cheeks were flushed by the sharp autumn air. He closed the door behind him and they were alone. Now her purpose was clear and she was no longer afraid of her heart. But she trembled as she said that he must be aware of why she had sent for him. It would make her "very happy," she said, if he would consent to what she wished.

We are able to turn to the Queen's Journal for the only record of the strange scene. It was when she was alone once more that she wrote of his goodness. He had not hesitated: he had received her offer with "the greatest demonstration of kindness and affection."



12 The Coronation of Queen Victoria: From the Painting by Sir George Hayter
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13 Queen Victoria about the time of her Marriage;
after Sir William C. Ross, R.A.

Prince Albert made no record of his own emotions; they had not changed from the first and they were not to change during the twenty-two years of life before him. He told her that when he went to her, he was resolved to declare that he was "tired of the delay and would withdraw entirely from the affair," if she did not come to a decision. His only comment upon the betrothal was, "Victoria is so good and kind to me that I am at a loss to believe that such affection should be shown to me." He remained calm and aloof and his heart was untouched, but there were no restraints upon the Queen's happiness. "He is perfection in every way, in beauty, in everything," she wrote to her uncle in Belgium. She had even told Albert that she was "quite unworthy of him." Her delight poured itself out in countless letters. Every Prince of Europe was to be told and Ministers were to be made aware of her happiness. "These last few days have passed like a dream to me," she wrote, "*I do feel very, very happy . . . I do so adore Albert . . . I cannot bear to part from him.*"

Prince Albert did not share her delight. He returned to Coburg, after writing to his stepmother, "My future position will have its dark sides and the sky will not always be blue and unclouded." "My future lot is high and brilliant, but also plentifully strewn with thorns." And then, with odd determination, "I shall never cease to be a true German, a true Coburg and Gotha man."

There were many signs of his apathy. He wrote to his aunt of his "dread of being unequal" to the position and of his "multitude of emotions." He allowed ten days to pass without writing to the Queen, a neglect which made her "quite miserable." He must have been bewildered by the strange division of her emotions. She would turn from her womanly delight to cold and autocratic commands. When he gently suggested the pleasures of a country life at Windsor, she answered, "I am the sovereign" and added that the business of

being Queen could "stop and wait for nothing." "Dear Albert," she wrote, "you have not at all understood the matter . . . it is quite impossible for me to be absent from London." She added, a little unkindly, "This is also my own wish, in every way."

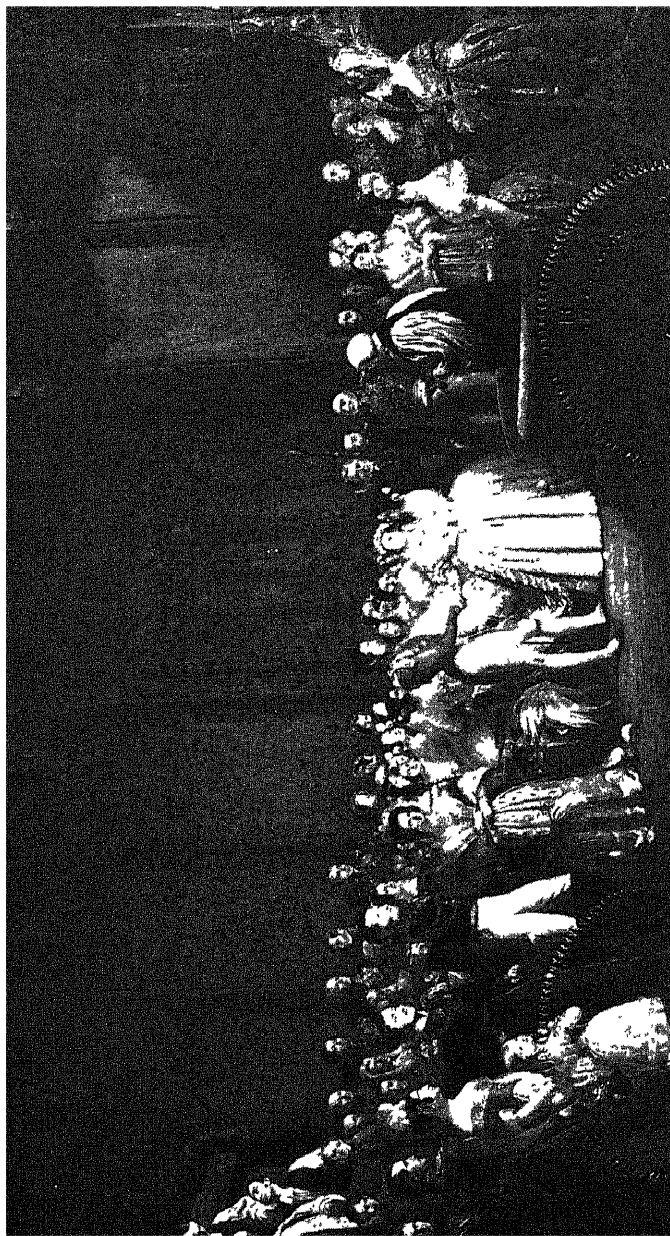
During the ten days of his silence Prince Albert was attending the funeral of his own youth, among the peasants and among those whom he loved in Coburg and Gotha. He fought against every habit and sentiment which he held dear, and his sense of duty shook itself free of emotion. At last he sat down and wrote to Queen Victoria. "How often my thoughts are with you! The hours I was privileged to pass with you in your dear little room are the radiant points of my life and I cannot even yet clearly picture to myself that I am to be indeed so happy as to be always near you, always your protector." His letters were kind and affectionate, but he did not tell Victoria that he loved her.

1840-1845

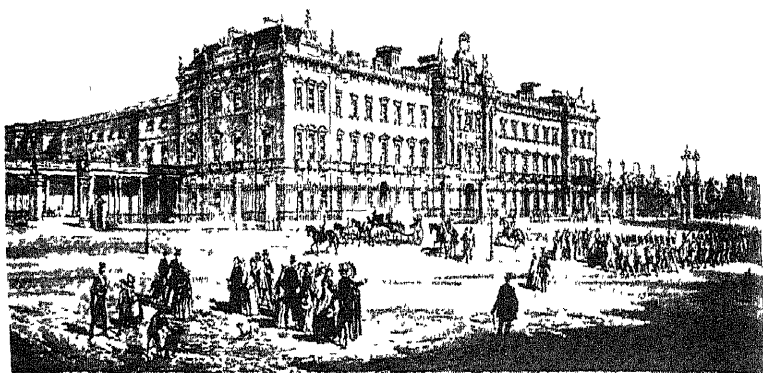
Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were married in London on February 10th, 1840. Two letters were written within Buckingham Palace on that wet, hurried morning. One was from the Queen to Prince Albert, folded in *billet* form and sent to him after breakfast. She wrote, "Send one word when you, my most dear beloved bridegroom, will be ready." She signed the note, "Thy ever-faithful Victoria R."

The other letter was from Prince Albert to his grandmother, in Gotha. "In less than three hours, I shall stand before the altar with my dear bride! In these solemn moments I must once more ask your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which will be my safeguard and my future joy! I must end." He added, in a wave of anxiety, "God help me."

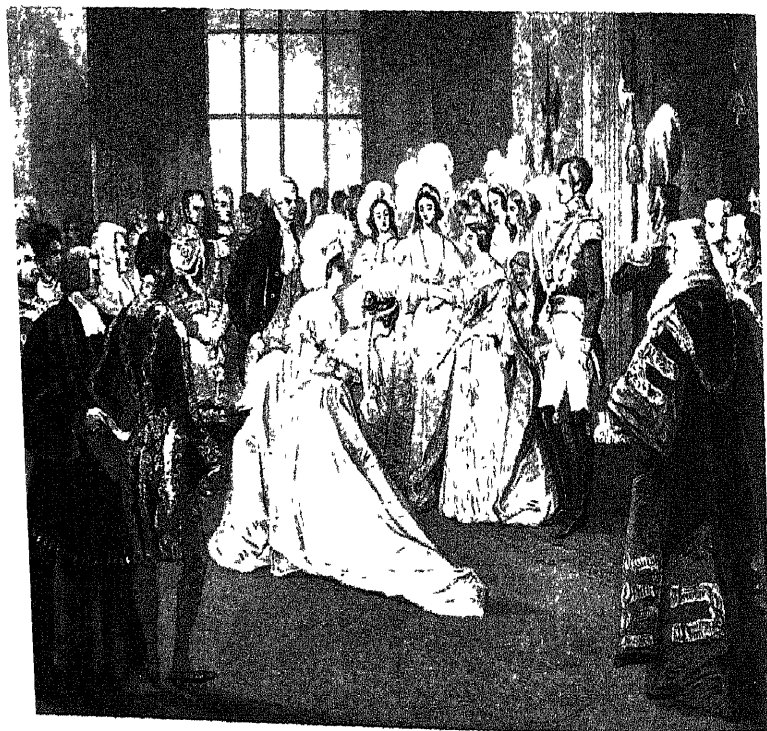
Late in the afternoon of the same day, when the tumult was over, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert stepped into



14 The Wedding of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. By Sir George Hayter
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15 Buckingham Palace: a Victorian View



16 A Drawing-room at Buckingham Palace

an old travelling coach, at the door of Buckingham Palace. She wore a white satin pelisse trimmed with swansdown, with a white satin bonnet and feathers. Her husband wore what was described as "a plain dark travelling dress."

The coach rolled out into the open country and when darkness was falling, so that the houses of Windsor "glowed with crowns, stars, and all the brilliant devices which gas and oil could supply," the pair drove up the hill to the Castle gates. Even in this hour, Queen Victoria did not escape from her graphomania and she opened her diary to write, "I and Albert, alone."

Next morning, she turned to her diary once more. Nor did she forget to share her joy with her Uncle Leopold. She wrote to him, after she had walked on the terrace with Prince Albert, "He is an angel, and his kindness and affection for me is really touching. To look in those dear eyes, and that dear sunny face, is enough to make me adore him. I was a good deal tired last night, but am quite well again to-day, and happy."

Still Albert was silent. His letters gave no hint of his inner feelings. But the Duchess of Bedford observed that she thought him to be "not a bit" in love. The honeymoon at Windsor did not last very long. Indeed, the gay gossip of the day, Greville, said that the Queen's friends were "shocked and hurt" because she did not stay in that retirement "which modesty and native delicacy generally prescribe."

But Queen Victoria had not confused the issues of her heart and her crown, and when she returned to London with her husband, she began the strange campaign of intimidation which increased Albert's bitterness. Before the marriage, she had written, "I have always had my own way. . . . Suppose he should endeavour to thwart me and oppose me in what I like, what a dreadful thing it would be!"

After marriage also, this battle between her love and

her royal aloofness went on. "What is in my power to make him happy, I will do," she boasted, but the boast was empty. Albert was not allowed to sit in the room when the Ministers called, politics and state affairs were avoided at the table; and he had to watch his wife leading a second and intensely interesting life in which he had no part. "I am only the husband and not the master in the house," he complained to a friend in Germany. The Queen's fear persisted. She was alarmed at the thought of sharing her power. Also, she had never dared, as she admitted, "to be unguarded in conversing with anybody" since she became Queen. It was not easy for her to believe that a wise, unprejudiced and trustworthy friend was beside her, in the guise of a husband. But the barriers were broken down, in time, and the fears departed. The power that dispelled her darkness was her great love which slowly allowed her to see not only the beauty of her husband's smile but also the merits of his judgment and the qualities of his mind. The Queen climbed down from the heights of independence and she learned to listen to the quiet, sad voice which was to guide her. Towards the end of the next year, some of her relatives came to stay with her, from Germany, and they agreed, after they went home again, that she had changed, "much to her advantage."

Impetuosity died and humility came. She did not mind now, when a little of the limelight was shed on her husband and she was pleased in June, after he had behaved so valiantly when a miscreant shot at her, because the people at the opera called for him separately and cheered. She gave public proof of the change in her will in August, when the Regency Bill was passed. At last Prince Albert was able to write to his brother, "In case of Victoria's death and her successor being under eighteen years of age, I am to be Regent—*alone*—Regent, without a Council. You will understand the importance of this matter and that it gives my position here in the country a fresh significance." Greville stirred in his bed

of nettles and wrote, "There is something like sunshine in the Palace just now." And, for the first time, Prince Albert wrote gently of his new life. His letter was to his brother, who was also playing with the thought of marriage. Albert said, "I wish you could be here and see in us, a couple joined in love and unanimity. Now Victoria is also ready to give up something for my sake, I everything for her sake. Become as happy as we are, more I cannot wish for you. Don't think I lead a submissive life; on the contrary, here, where the position of the man is as it is, I have formed a prize life for myself."

Thus their understanding grew. Their nursery was always full and its problems kept them busy. They pored over plans for building, they planted new trees at Windsor and they re-arranged the rooms. They engaged artists to ornament their pavilions and they made little jokes against the politicians. Palmerston was obviously translated into *Pilgerstein*, and, over the dinner-table, they manufactured puns. (They had been brought back into fashion when the Duke of Cumberland went to sleep at dinner and said, when he was startled into wakefulness, "Ah, you will call me the Duke of Slumberland now.") There was so much to laugh over, for Victoria always said that she disliked a "Sunday face." They made their etchings in the evening, they played cards together and, unharassed by discontent, they lived sublimely, needing nothing from the world outside. When Uncle Leopold came to see them, he sat back, rather sententiously, and said, "It is astonishing with how little morality the world is governed." The Queen and Prince Albert were silent. They had discovered another law for the government of their lives, and Albert was sincere when he wrote to his brother of the "chains of matrimony." "The heavier and tighter they are, the better for you," he said. "A married couple must be chained to one another, be inseparable, and they must live for one another."

No interest shared by the Queen and Prince Albert gave them greater pleasure than the building of Balmoral; their second home of escape from the smoke and business of London. In September of 1855, the wonderful new castle was almost complete. In the hours of escape from work, Prince Albert had designed the turrets, the doorways, the furniture and the upholstery. A few phrases from a letter written by one of the ladies-in-waiting give us a picture of this busy time when "Every trade connected with housebuilding and furnishing was carrying on its own particular business within those four walls." The general woodwork was "light coloured, maple and birch chiefly, with locks and hinges, etc., silvered. . . . Highlanders, beautifully designed figures, holding the light, and table ornaments in the same style, and loads of curiously devised and tasteful, as well as elaborately executed articles; the only want is a certain absence of harmony. . . ."

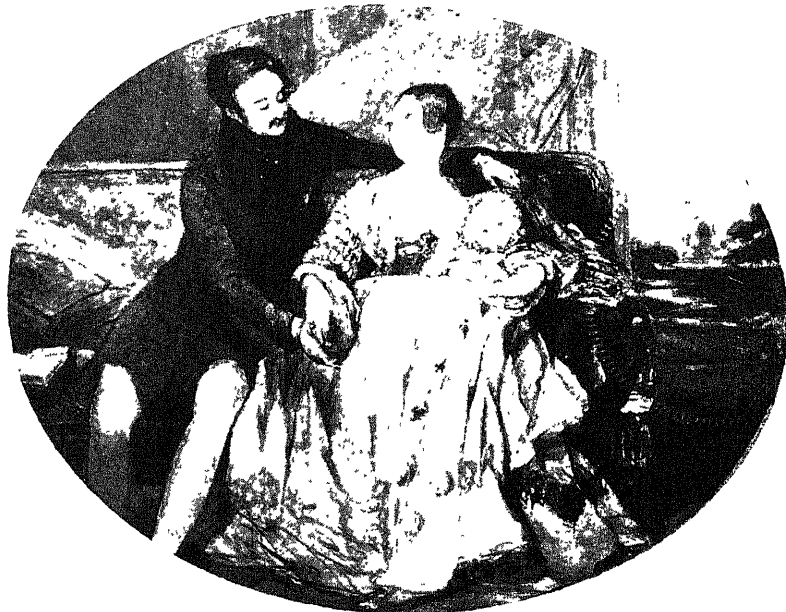
The memorial to Victorian taste was complete. The carpets were of Royal Stuart Tartan and green Hunting Stuart, the curtains, the former lined with red, the same dress Stuart and a few chintz with a thistle pattern; the chairs and sofas in the drawing-room were "dress Stuart poplin."

Balmoral was the background for many scenes of romance and celebration during the Queen's reign. In the main, the life beside the Dee was simple and one likes to recall the Queen walking from cottage to cottage, carrying a big roll of Scottish linsey, from which she cut lengths from which the women made their winter petticoats, or of the little Court picnicking on the moors, with not even a Minister to remind them that Whitehall existed. Ten years after the Highland castle was built, in the summer of 1855, a wood pile was built out on the moors, waiting for the fall of Sebastopol. It had waited for a year and when the great news of the victory came, Prince Albert forgot his precise manner and his tiredness and he joined the ghillies in dancing a "veritable witch's

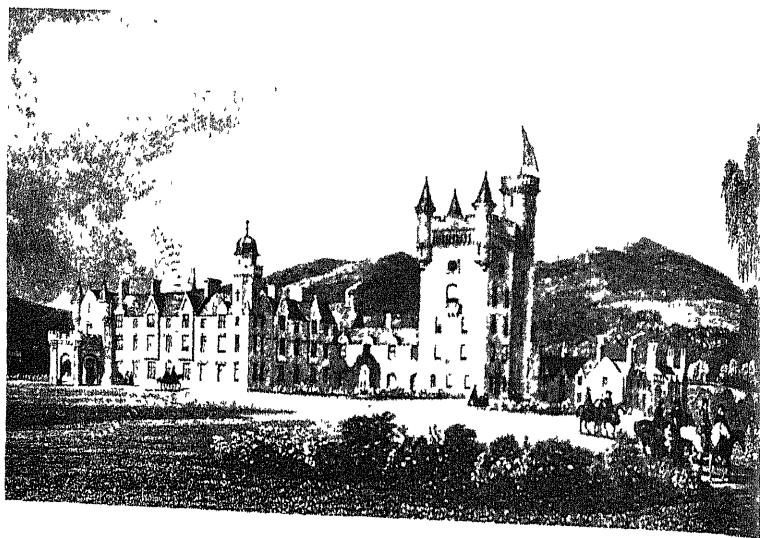


17 Early Days at Osborne: after Winterhalter

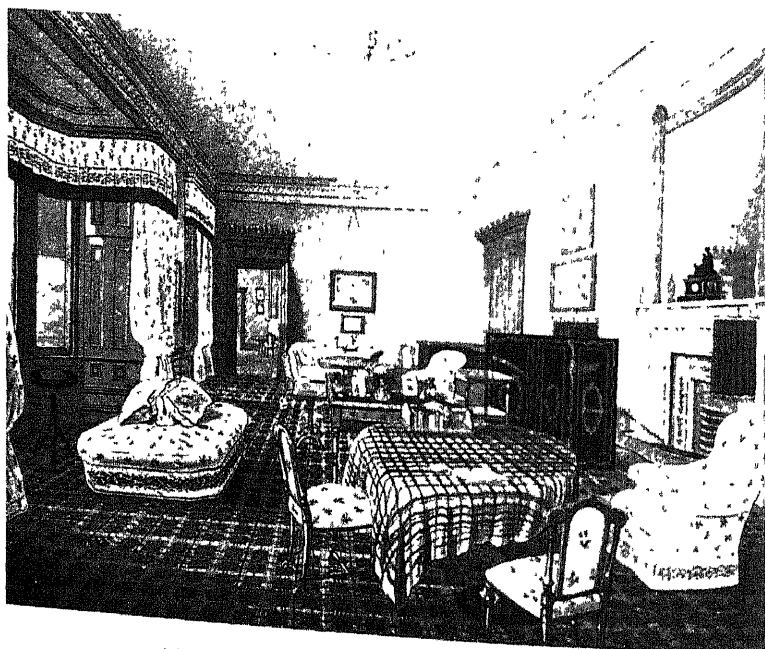
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18 Early Days at Windsor: after Winterhalter



19 Balmoral: an early Engraving



20 The Queen's Sitting-room at Balmoral, 1857

dance, supported by whisky." The Queen had watched him from her window, outlined against the flames. It was in the same year that the Deeside staged a betrothal which was to have strange after effects upon the history of Europe. Princess Victoria and Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who were to be mother and father of the Kaiser, became engaged at Balmoral in the summer. They had met once, when the Great Exhibition was opened in 1851. Princess Victoria had been no more than a child then. Even now, as she was being courted by the tall, gallant Prussian, she was only sixteen, shy, and, her mother pointed out, "not yet even confirmed." Prince Frederick joined the party in their rides and walks and after he had been at Balmoral for a few days, he begged permission to court the young Princess. One afternoon, when they were riding up a slope not so very far from Balmoral, the two young people paused and the Prince leaned over and picked her a sprig of white heather. He placed it in her hand and, as they rode home, he told her that he loved her.

The pretty little scene began a grand and terrible chapter of history. More than any of the other children, Princess Victoria understood her father. She too was methodical and exacting, and they had worked together and they had loved each other. Yet he was willing to sacrifice her, in his hope that a marriage would draw Prussia and Britain together, in friendship and understanding. "I am not of a demonstrative nature," he wrote to her, after her splendid wedding was over. "My heart was very full when yesterday you leaned your forehead on my breast to give vent to your tears. . . ."

One of the happiest proofs of Queen Victoria's contentment was in her relationship with her mother, who lived, for the greater part of the year, at Frogmore House, in the Windsor Home Park. The Castle was vast and grand, but Frogmore was built upon modest lines. Its colonnade looked out upon a small lake, upon banks of daffodils and fearless water-fowl, peering from among

the bullrushes. In the winter time, when the scene was white and still, Albert would skate there, while the Queen and her mother walked upon the island, watching the slim, graceful figure gliding so picturesquely before them, the snowflakes shaken from the trees caught in his hair. The Duchess was no longer distressed and anxious. There was no Georgian ogre in the castle, against whom she must plot to maintain her daughter's rights. Most important of all, the harshness with her daughter had passed and there were no misunderstandings now, to mar the even tenor of their affection.

Lady Augusta Bruce was among the ladies who lived with the Duchess at Frogmore, and she wrote many letters describing the scenes of her life. "Do you smell the roses and the honeysuckle in my glass . . . do you see the swans on the lake and the birds hopping about on the short grass under the big oak trees?"

Sometimes the Queen would come down from the Castle, *quite alone*. "Her kindness, her anxiety, her tenderness, are too dear," wrote Lady Augusta, who had watched the changes which love had brought to the Queen's character. But it was Prince Albert who captured the hearts of this little, lesser Court, tucked away among the trees. He was shy—but they loved his "good sense and *feeling*." "The *blessing* he is to the Queen and country," wrote Lady Augusta, who was never wild or unbalanced in her enthusiasm. She commented on "the good" which he did, his "kindness, his well-conditioned mind and tastes, and his anxious desire to do what is right and encourage and develop in others all that is good."

Prince Albert was fond of his aunt: he was bound to her through their common love for the valley in Germany, whence they both came to England. They would walk through the Windsor park together, pausing by the hollow in which Falstaff slept, or walking along the river bank towards Datchet, recalling people and stories of Coburg and its forest.



The Duchess had gathered a company of ladies about her, one of them German, the others English. The life of this little Court seemed to be barely in touch with the world. They wrote fragrant letters and they learned to play new songs upon the pianoforte. Sometimes there was a fashionable duet, just arrived from Paris. They sat in the Flower Room, with the sun streaming in upon them, exchanging gentle gossip or watching the children playing upon the lawn. The ageing Duchess delighted in curiosities, as she called them, and a parcel from France always enthralled her. She played with her grandchildren; she watched them feeding the chickens or gathering gooseberries, and, sometimes, refreshing the vanities of her youth, she would ask questions about the fashions in France, wishing to know "if the people were wearing great magnificence of gowns," if they were wearing "ribbons or feathers" and she would order "a nice *bonbonnière* for her to carry her peppermint drops in," made of tortoiseshell, from "one of the smart bonbon-makers in Paris."

For both the Queen and Prince Albert, the Duchess's Court was always a quiet release from their busy life, whether at Windsor or Balmoral. The beautiful nineteenth-century gothic castle in Scotland was now complete: its turrets rose in great elegance beside the Dee. The Duchess was given Abergeldie House, near by, and there she transferred her Court, every summer. The greatest occasion during this interlude away from the busy south was her birthday. She would be awakened, on the sunny day in August, by the National Anthem being played beneath her bedroom window. The whole household would gather upon the lawn, looking up at her window. There would be flowers in their button-holes, music in their hands and feathers in their caps. It was "very pretty" with all the maids carrying bouquets, "all so neat and tidy." Then the ladies and gentlemen would assemble in the dining-room to wait for the Duchess to come in, dressed in white. An ode would

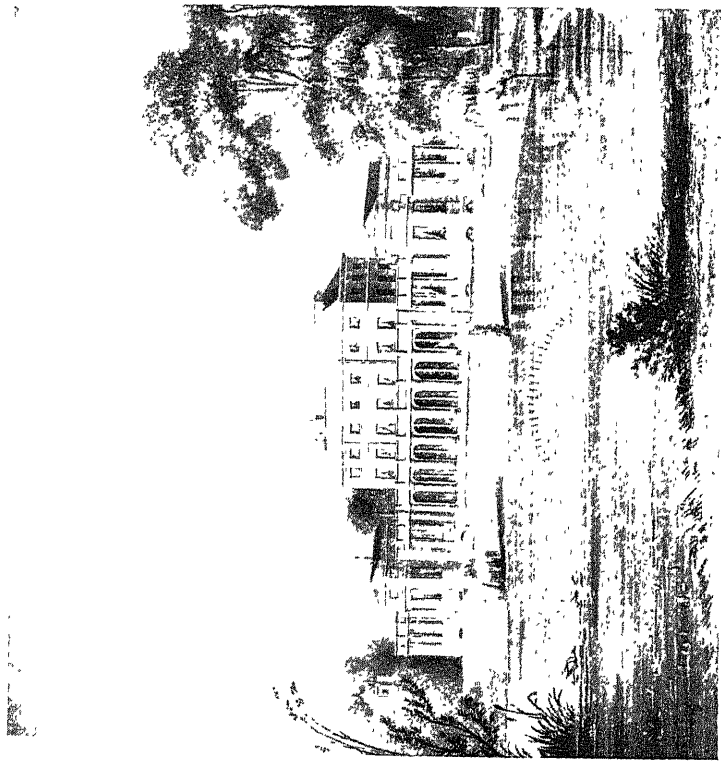
be read to her, and then the party would move to the drawing-room. The round table would be decorated with lovely wreaths and presents: bronze table ornaments and miniatures, embroidered stools, a hand-worked chair, to be discovered beneath a cover of silver paper, and a pen-tray, supported by "two most funny looking bears, on their hind legs."

Later on the birthday morning, the Queen would walk from Balmoral. In the evening, the Duchess usually dined with her daughter, or the Queen would drive over, with Prince Albert, to dine at Abergeldie. After dinner, they would sit upon a sofa, armed with a Gaelic dictionary, pursuing their desire for improvement. There would be puns and jokes, and the Duchess would laugh and say that her ladies were very "notty." She would play for them, and sing, or she would sit at the table over her whist, until her ladies would look at her nodding head and see that she was almost asleep.

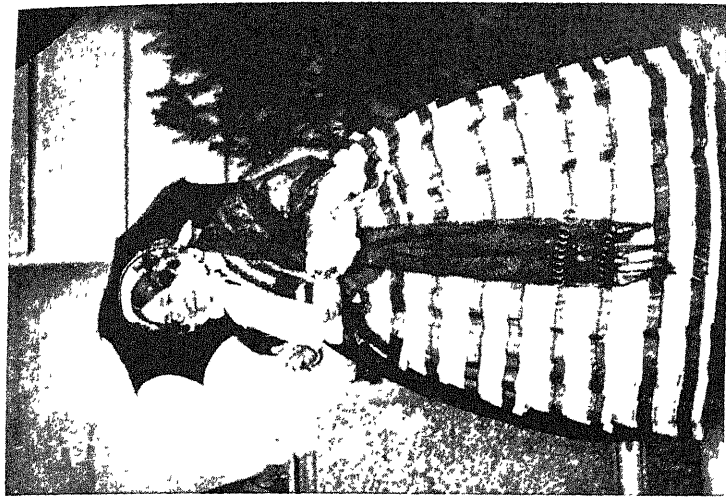
It was such peace as this that came out of Prince Albert's influence. It calmed all who came near him. The story of the Queen and her husband took on a happier light and, through the political muddles and international conflicts which unsettled the country, their affection sustained them. They had found the secret which cannot be defined and it embraced their religion, their minds, their family and their laughter. How pleasantly their relationship emerges from the story of the proposed addition to the Liturgy, before one of the Queen's babies was born. Somebody asked the Prince if, in view of her state, a phrase might be introduced into the prayer. "No, no; you have one already in the Litany," he answered. "All women labouring with child." You pray already five times for the Queen."

The courtier beside him said: "Can we pray, Sir, too much for Her Majesty?"

Prince Albert answered: "Not too heartily, but too often."



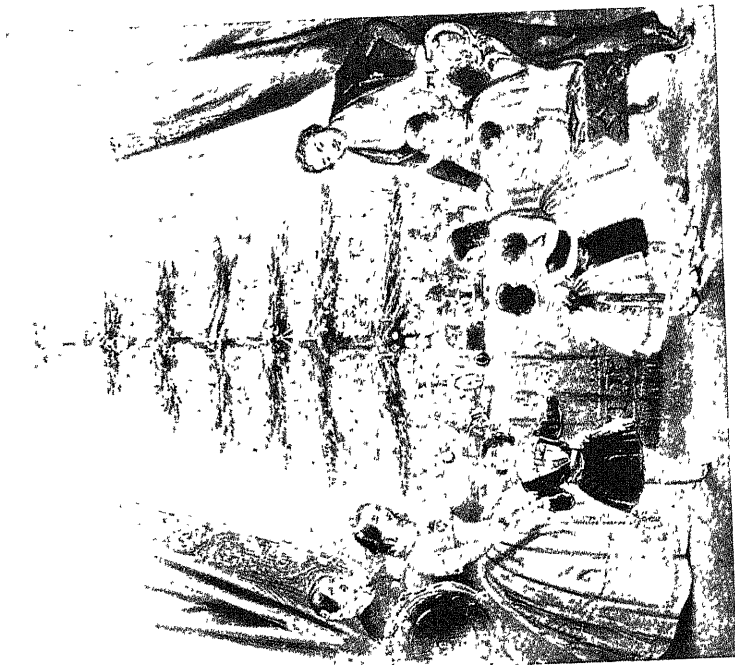
22 Frogmore House, Windsor.



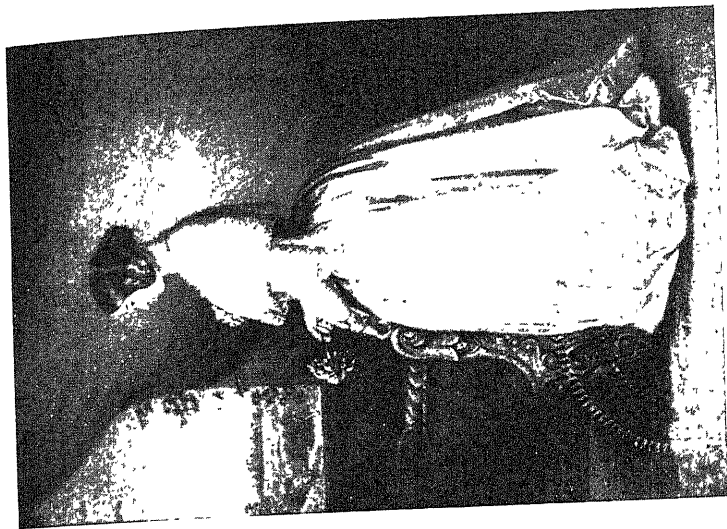
23 The Duchess of Kent in old age



24 The Queen and Prince Consort with their Family, 1846. A Sketch for the Picture at Buckingham Palace



25 The first Christmas Tree, 1848



26 The Queen in 1851: after Landseer



27 The Arrival in Cologne, 1845



28 On the Rhine, 1845

1845

Five years passed before Prince Albert took his bride to see the castles of Thuringia, in which he had spent his childhood. He had been to his home in March of 1844 and his letters to his wife had stimulated her wish to see his birthplace. It had been their first separation and he had written tenderly to her. "Fortify yourself with the thought of my speedy return. God's blessing rest upon you and the dear children. . . . I enclose an auricula and a pansy which I gathered at Reinhardtsbrun. . . . I have got toys for the children, and porcelain views for you how glad I should be to have my little wife beside me, that I might share my pleasure with her."

In August of 1845, the Queen and Prince Albert went to Coburg together. For the first time, they were to be quiet and the red despatch boxes of Whitehall and the trickery of Palmerston were all to be forgotten. "If strangers wish to come, don't encourage them to remain," Prince Albert wrote to his brother, before they left England. "We are by no means expecting grand festivals. . . . Victoria likes to dance, especially at small *thè dansants*. You might arrange some. . . . I must mention that on Sundays we would not go to a ball or to the theatre, but there is no reason why we should not be happily assembled."

They began their journey, which was indeed their honeymoon. Its success was assured when they came to Cologne where the streets were sprinkled with *eau de Cologne*, so that her journey through the city should be fragrant. Queen Victoria was able to share Prince Albert's youth with him. The scenes dwindled from the richness to which she was accustomed. They stood in the room at Bonn in which he had slept when he was a student, and as they came to the frontier of the little Duchy which his brother now ruled, with no more than one hundred thousand people paying him allegiance, the Queen said that she "began to feel greatly moved." The

sun shone and showers of blossoms fell on them. The Bürgermeister was "quite overcome" when he stepped out in front of the townspeople to welcome her. It seemed to be the most splendid day in the history of Coburg.

The people of the town understood the Queen's wish to be quiet and she was allowed to escape to Rosenau Castle, the little sham gothic house which was saturated with memories for Albert. "My Albert's birthplace, the place he most loved," Queen Victoria wrote in her diary. He was "so, so happy to be there" with her. It was "like a beautiful dream."

The fortunate accident was that their holiday included Prince Albert's birthday. Twenty-six years before, the old Duchess had written, after sitting beside her daughter-in-law's bed, "At six, the little one gave his first cry in this world." There was so much for Albert to recall and so much for him to tell the Queen. On the afternoon of his birthday, they walked alone by the streams and through the forest. "The great farm waggons lumbered up the hill, their drivers wiping the sweat from their foreheads. The blackbirds flew down among the rich corn. The pine trees sheltered Victoria and Albert as they walked. They came to a pool which Albert had known as a child. He made a drinking cup for Victoria, with his hands, because the water was so cool."

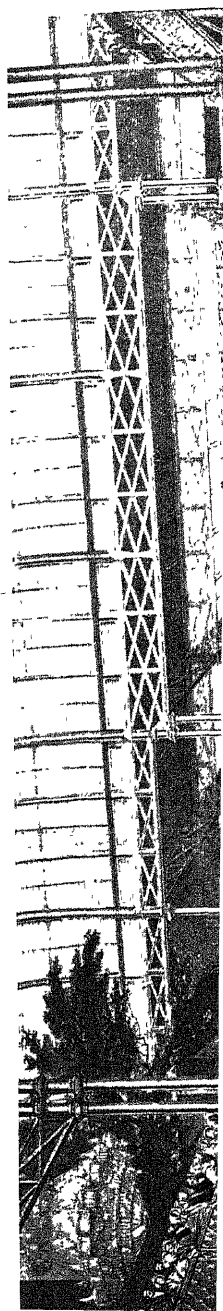
A peasant woman came along the path, and when she saw them, she said *Guten Abend*. The Queen answered her and gave her some money. "She shook my hand for it," wrote Victoria. "I don't think she the least knew who I was."

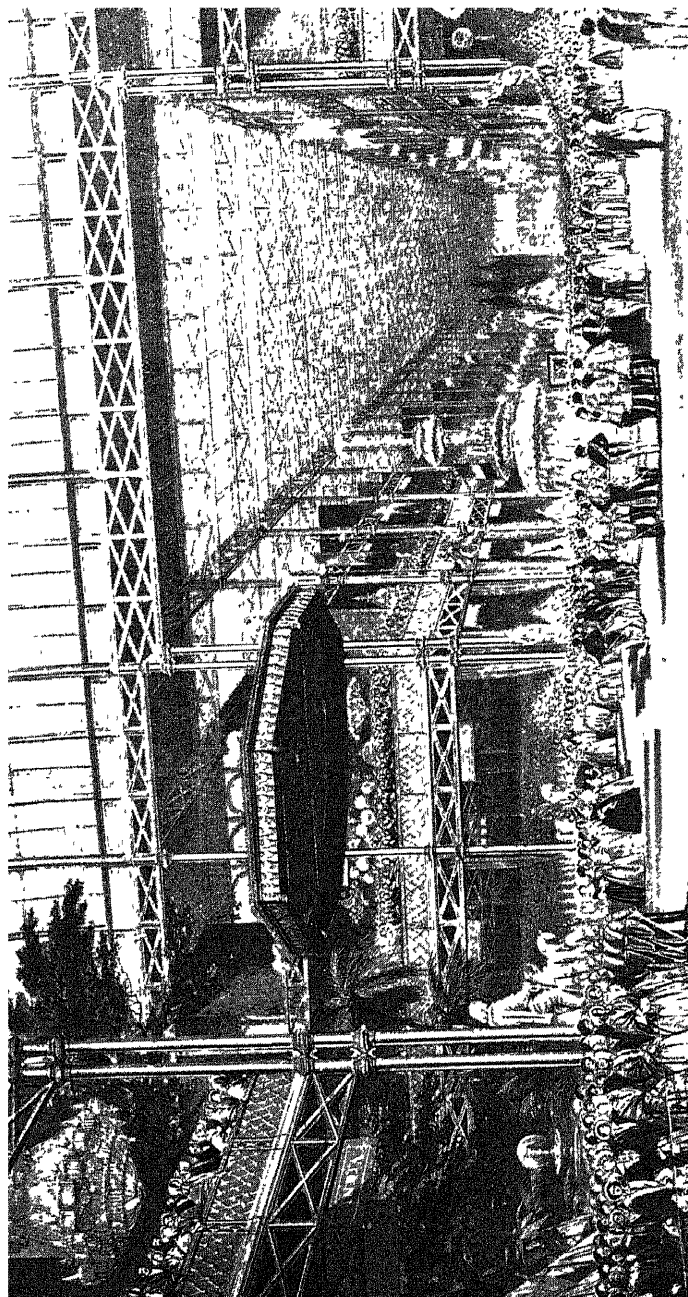
1851

The noblest day of Prince Albert's life came in May of 1851, when the Great Exhibition was opened in the Crystal Palace, in Hyde Park. The year 1849 had strained the temper of Europe beyond endurance . . . he had

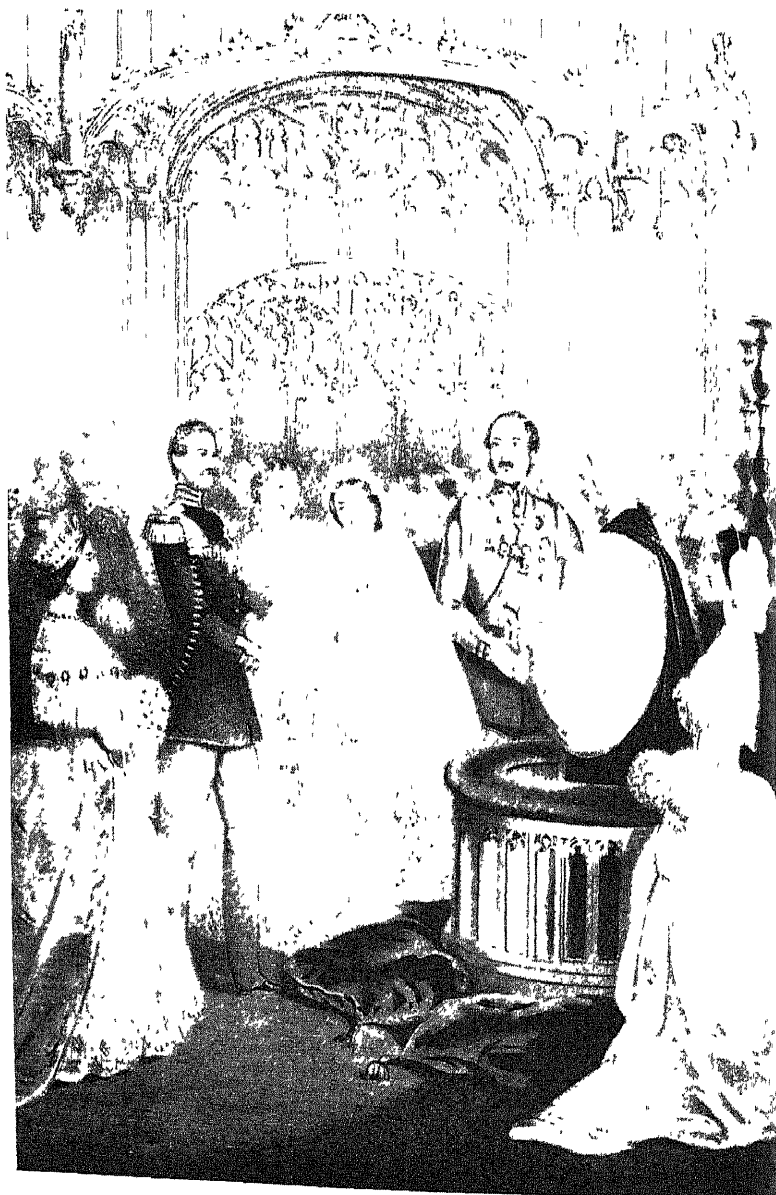


The Royal Family The Prince of Wales afloat in his New Boat on Virginia Water





30 The Opening of the Great Exhibition, May 1st, 1851



31 The Wedding of the Princess Royal, Chapel Royal,
St. James's, 1856

been tired of the long wrangle and, in despair, he swept the truculent German newspapers aside. "I don't like to write to Germany any more," he complained. His great vision came; it was the moment to show the world that it was by exalting industry and the domestic virtues that humanity would advance. He wished to show them that their emancipation would come through the plough and the lathe and not through the sword. Through the summer and winter of 1850, he planned his greatest enterprise. Paxton sketched his fabulous glass palace upon a sheet of paper, and from this hurried drawing, the scheme grew; the manufacturers were reconciled and then cajoled into enthusiasm. When the new year opened, the glittering palace was already rising above the calm green spaces of Hyde Park. It was one thousand feet long, and the transept rose one hundred feet towards the sky.

A blazing arch of lucid glass
Leaps like a fountain from the grass
To meet the sun.

The "complete and beautiful triumph" was opened in May of 1851. Prince Albert led the Queen into the Crystal Palace, past the iron gates, the palms, the statues, and the beautiful crystal fountain. They held the hands of their two elder children. There is something pathetic about the prints of the occasion: the little Queen and her adored Prince beside her, the two children, passing into the vast palace, the lines of trumpeters, the groups of smart persons who had watched the career of the young German prince with contemptuous disfavour. It was Albert's day and Albert's exhibition. While statesmen had wrestled and while the mob had woven a dream of freedom, he had worked in grave silence, and this was the fruit of his labour.

The little group moved forward. The Queen was in ecstasy. "God bless my dearest Albert. God bless my dearest country," she wrote.

Six million people were to stare in astonishment at the wonder he had made. Day after day, the Queen and Prince Albert went to the Exhibition. There were eleven miles of tables and displays to be seen. The Rajah of Travancore had sent an ivory throne; there were bedsteads in zebra wood, with figures in panels, and curtains, looped again and again. There was a riot of terra-cotta and majolica, lacquer work from Lahore, jewelled weapons from Madrid, Swiss cabinets with orgies of carving upon them, vases from Stoke-on-Trent, church plate from Coventry, produce and pretty devices from the Colonies. And there was a "submarine boat . . . the shape of a broad-backed carp." The Queen was "bewildered from the myriads of beautiful and wonderful things. . . ."

"Albert's name is immortalised," she wrote. Alabaster goddesses rose from marble shells in which water bubbled in many colours. An American organ, crowned by a colossal eagle, spilled music upon the heads of the people; the great elm tree within the palace moved gently in the cool, fresh wind which came from the park. There were thousands of objects of beauty, fire-screens, grates and fenders, ornamented and lavish, stands for palms, bowls of mother o' pearl, set in ormolu, clocks set in triangles of metal design, cupids rising from leaves, birds trembling upon twigs, stiff and brassy, chandeliers of crystal, carpets and cushions worked with minute patterns and sentimental colours.

Prince Albert had awakened voices more amazing than the ancestral voices prophesying war. British industry was flourishing; Victorian decoration was born. The wives of the countryside would put all their ugly old English furniture up into the garrets. There were to be beds with Indian fretwork panels in the great houses of England, tables were to be gay with stiff and jolly imitation flowers, walls were to be lively with floral sprays and birds. But, most important of all, the world was coming to London to see an exhibition of products

of peaceful occupation and enlightened husbandry. Here was Albert's lesson to the world—that swords should be beaten into ploughshares. "All is owing to Albert—All to him," wrote the Queen in her Journal. And it was true.

1858

The busy years rolled on. The Princes and Princesses of the nursery grew up and took their places in the world. The Princess Royal was in Berlin, expounding her Liberal ideas, and the Prince of Wales had paused, in his turbulent adolescence, to be confirmed at Windsor. He had acquitted himself "extremely well."

But Prince Albert had grown old in serving his wife and children. Next time he went to Coburg, he walked slowly, although he was only thirty-nine years old. Work had always sat heavily on him and the twenty years of government had exhausted him entirely. Once more he walked in the gardens of Rosenau, but "the hand that picked pansies . . . placing them tenderly in a box for Victoria, was fat and middle-aged and the eyes which looked through the tunnel of trees, to the rosy fortress on the hill, were tired. He was menaced by papers and memoranda. There had been no rest. Nor did Coburg make him happy any more, for depression had conquered him. "I have become an utter stranger here," he wrote, and he hurried back to England. But the complaints of tiredness did not pass. Early in 1860, he said that he was "tired to death with work, vexation and worry." When he saw the donkey working the old treadmill, at Carisbrooke, he drew the dismal comparison. The donkey was, he said, his "true counterpart." "He, too, would rather munch thistles in the Castle Moat . . . small are the thanks he gets for his labour." The flame was exhausted. "I do not cling to life," he said one day to the Queen. "You do; but I set no store by it. If I knew that those I love were well

cared for, I should be quite ready to die to-morrow. . . . If I had a severe illness, I should give up at once. I should not struggle for life."

On November 22nd, Prince Albert drove over to Sandhurst to see the buildings of the new Staff College. The day was cold and dark and the rain fell incessantly. He returned to Windsor, ill and tired. On the following Sunday the weather cleared again and, with the Queen, he walked down to Frogmore. The house was still and deserted and the dome of the new mausoleum rose like a fabulous bubble above the trees. When they arrived back in the castle, Albert wrote in his diary: "Am full of rheumatic pains, and feel thoroughly unwell. Have scarcely closed my eyes at night for the last fortnight."

Monday saw him travelling through the cold and storm to Cambridge. During the fourteen sleepless nights, he had thought and thought of his son. He must see him, in the midst of his Cambridge life. He stayed there for one day and was back in Windsor on Tuesday—again he wrote that he was wretched and that his back and legs were in pain.

On December 5th, the Queen wrote: "He did not smile or take much notice of me. . . . His manner all along was so unlike himself, and he had sometimes such a strange, wild look. I left him to get dressed in a state of cruel anxiety. . . . In the evening he seemed more himself, most dear and affectionate when I went in with little Beatrice, whom he kissed. He quite laughed at some of her new French verses which I made her repeat."

Dr. Jenner came. He saw that work had weakened and exhausted the Prince and he urged the Queen to speak to the Ministers. But Albert would not even go to bed. Three days afterwards, he seemed to recover a little of his power. The day was sunny—he looked out of the window, was pleased with the more cheerful scene, and asked for some music. Princess Alice went into the room and played *Eine Feste Burg ist Unser Gott*, and later, when evening came, the Queen sat beside him and read

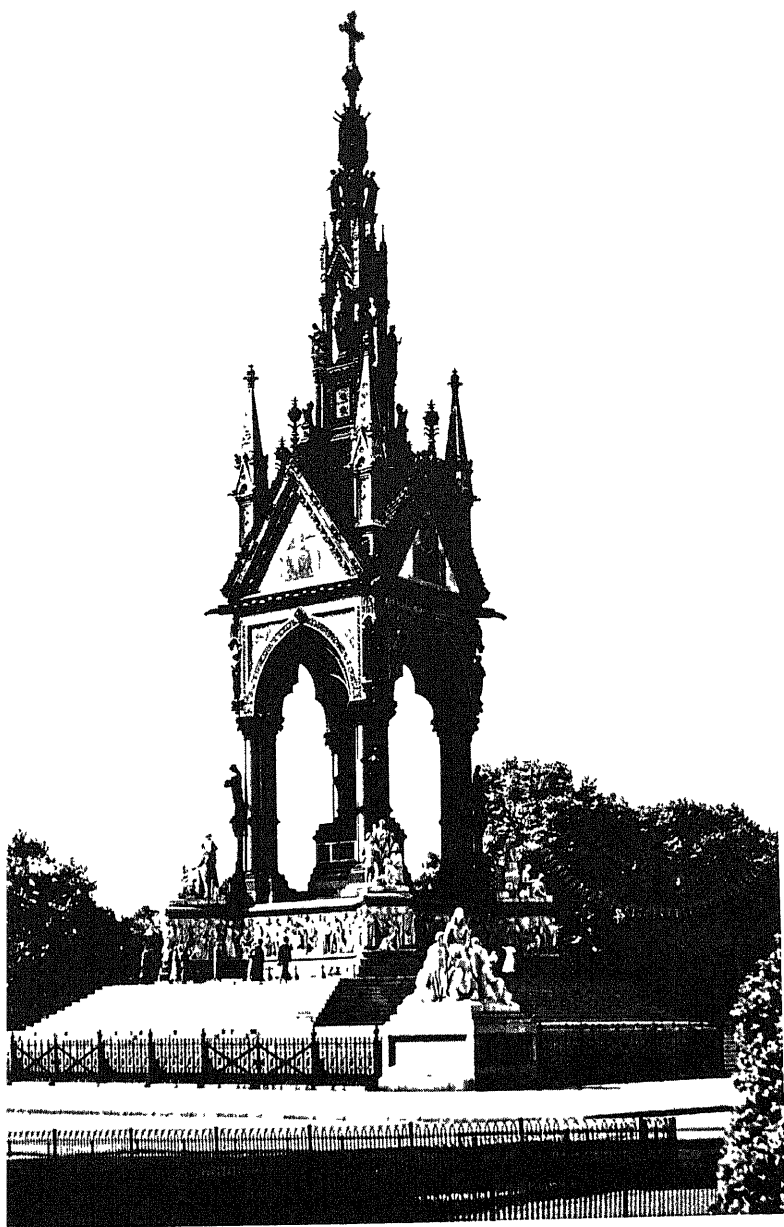
Peveril of the Peak to him. He was more contented. When Victoria leaned near to him, he held her hand and stroked her face. Day after day, the vigil continued. One morning, the Queen went over to him at eight o'clock and found him sitting up, to take his beef tea. . . . "I supported him, and he laid his dear head—his beautiful face, more beautiful than ever, has grown so thin—on my shoulder, and remained a little while, saying: 'It is very comfortable so, dear child,' which made me so happy."

He had talked to her of his not being able to understand how she clung to the present, of his wish to do what was right while he lived, and of his still deeper wish that he should come to the calm and security of death. She watched his sinking with terror. Morning after morning she went to him. The room had a sad look of night watching—the candles burned down to their sockets. "Never can I forget how beautiful my darling looked lying there with his face lit up by the rising sun—his eyes unusually bright, gazing as it were on unseen objects, but not taking any notice of me." ". . . how I wish that I could hear the little birds singing, as I used to do at Rosenau," Prince Albert had whispered to her when the sun shone upon him through the window.

The Queen watched him hour after hour. A dusky hue came into his face, he folded his arms and arranged his hair, as though "he were preparing for another and greater journey." He called her "Good little wife," and he kissed her, but he moaned, as if he felt that he was leaving her. She never cried once while she was beside him, but every hour or so, she would creep into the next room, in a "*terrible burst of misery*." "The country; oh, the country," she cried. "I could perhaps bear my own misery, but the poor country."

While the Queen was out of the bedroom, Princess Alice leaned over her father. She whispered to Lady Augusta, "That is the death rattle," and went for her mother. The Queen knelt beside the bed and held her

husband's hand. But it was already cold. The breathing grew fainter and fainter. "Oh, yes, this is death, I know it. I have seen this before," she whispered. She fell upon his dead body and called him by every endearing name. Then she sank back into the arms of her ladies and they carried her from the room.





35 The Queen, 1864
... May all love
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow thee

PART II

QUEEN VICTORIA AND HER
MINISTERS

1861-1866

FOUR relationships dominated the last half of Queen Victoria's reign. In the wider field of her power, she came to depend upon her "dear" Lord Beaconsfield. "I plight my troth to the kindest of *Mistresses*" he wrote to her, and she accepted this gallant pledge, without suspicion or surprise. She came also to trust Lord Salisbury. She declared it to be a "blessing" to have a Prime Minister "in whom she could *thoroughly* confide, and whose opinion was always given in so kind and wise a manner." The third figure haunted and distressed her. To the end, she neither liked Mr. Gladstone nor appreciated his stern devotion to the Crown. "How can I say that I am sorry when I am not?" she said, when he died. The fourth relationship, that nearest to her heart and calculated to cause her greatest alarm, was with her son and heir.

Lord Beaconsfield was the only man in England who was able to help Queen Victoria to diminish her grief over the death of Prince Albert. During the early years after her tragedy, the Queen would not be roused from her melancholy. In the first weeks, as she sat in her room at Osborne, she wrote, "The things of this life are of no interest to the Queen." Without her "dear angel" she had no wish to live. Her obsession frightened those who cared for her and caused them to be anxious for her reason. She hung Prince Albert's portrait, wreathed with *immortelles*, over the empty pillow beside her; when her Prime Minister came to see her, she received him with a bust of Prince Albert on the table beside her. Sometimes she made wreaths of flowers and hung them

about the white marble throat of the figure. His image was in the gold bracelet on her wrist. When spring came, she turned against its beauty. She wrote that she felt as though *her life* had ended on *that* dreadful day when she lost that bright Angel who was her idol, the life of her life: and the time seems to have passed like *one long, dark day*. And then, "*She* sees the trees budding, the days lengthen, the primroses coming out, but *she thinks* herself in the month of December . . . she wastes and pines . . . with a broken and bleeding heart, and with but *one* consolation—to *rejoin him* again—*never to part.*"

The Queen arranged every possible monument to Prince Albert's merits. His body was buried at Windsor, in an imposing Romanesque mausoleum, ornamented with mosaics within and crowned by copper without. It was to be near to the pond upon which he had skated so elegantly in the first winters of their marriage. Four bronze angels were to extend their wings to support his marble effigy upon the sarcophagus; a wide sarcophagus, wide enough for her to join him when her unhappy life should end. Over the door of the mausoleum would be written, "*Farewell, well beloved. Here, at last, I will rest with thee.*" In London, near to the Palace in Kensington where she was born, he was to be sculptured in gold, holding the catalogue of his wonderful Exhibition, and his effigy was to be seated beneath a canopy of unsurpassed, oriental-gothic beauty. Henry the Third's Chapel at Windsor, where Wolsey had planned to be buried, was to be restored and redecorated with mosaics and portraits of her children in marble; all in Prince Albert's memory. The British people were not to be allowed to forget him.

Queen Victoria never wholly escaped from her obsession of sorrow, but it was lightened from the time when her friendship with Mr. Disraeli began, in 1866. He came in a fortunate year, when her nature seemed to shake itself free of a little of its gloom, of its own accord.

For the first time since the winter of 1861, those about the Queen noted the change. One of her ladies-in-waiting wrote of her mistress's refreshed courage, "no longer repining, talking, not as one unique in sorrow, but as one of ourselves." The moods of sovereigns spread quickly into the world about them and the mass of people seemed glad to welcome her recovery from melancholy. One surprising tribute was paid to her by her political enemy, John Bright, who defended her at a Reform meeting in St. James's Hall. Somebody had spoken disparagingly of the Queen's retirement at Windsor and of her apparent hatred of coming into the public view. John Bright answered, "I am not accustomed to stand up in defence of those who are the possessors of crowns; but I could not sit here and hear that observation without a sensation of wonder and pain. I think there has been, by many persons, a great injustice done to the Queen in reference to her desolate and widowed position. And I venture to say this, that a woman—be she Queen of a great Realm, or be she the wife of one of your labouring men—who can keep alive in her heart a great sorrow for the lost object of her life and affection, is not at all likely to be wanting in a great and generous sympathy with you." One more aspect of the Queen's character must be recalled before one understands why it was that Mr. Disraeli gave her strength which none of her other Prime Ministers gave her. Some time afterwards she wrote in her Journal, "I feel how sadly deficient I am, and how over-sensitive and irritable, and how uncontrollable my temper is, when annoyed and hurt. But I am so overcome, so vexed, and in such distress about my country, that that must be my excuse. I will pray daily for God's help to improve." This inner humility does not accord with the popular notion of Queen Victoria's arrogance. But it was true that she had always been haunted by a sense of her deficiency, and it was true that her feminine nature needed the guidance of a male intelligence. In the beginning,

she had relied upon Lord Melbourne and through the years of her marriage, she had relied upon Prince Albert. Now began the third period of her power, when she found in her favourite Minister the encouragement and kindness which she needed. No miracle could have made Gladstone into her friend. He had, according to one of the ladies-in-waiting, "no possible understanding of a joke" and Queen Victoria always understood a joke. If it is true that she was once "not amused" perhaps it was because the story was a poor one. There is no proof that she turned from it because it was not polite.

Queen Victoria is abused
Because she said "I'm not amused."
No one knows the joke they told.
Perhaps 'twas thin and rather old.

If this is so, it seems to me,
The Queen was quite at liberty
To greet the courtier's mouldy quip
With a tightening of the lip.

1866-1868

Mr. Disraeli brought his mistress intelligence, charm and humour, and these belonged to the language which she understood. She forgot all the old gibes against him, even Prince Albert's prejudice against young Disraeli's flamboyant waistcoats. Contemporary statesmen watched the growing confidence with scorn and Lord Clarendon wrote, "The Jew, 'the most subtle beast in the field' has, like Eve's tempter, ingratiated himself with the Missus." Nevertheless, the ingratiating was for the country's good. One of the first signs of Disraeli's influence over the Queen came when the question of Royal residence in Ireland was revived. A succession of Prime Ministers had tried to divert her from her old dislike of the Irish and their problems. Lady Augusta Stanley had written, with more subtlety than any of the Ministers, "How much I hope that Your Majesty may some day be able to see some of the peculiar beauties of



36 Mr Gladstone, 1869



37 Lord Beaconsfield



Irish scenery. . . . I am certain that Your Majesty in no degree over-estimates the good that would result from it." The Lord Lieutenant had pleaded that the Prince of Wales should be allowed to visit Ireland but with so little success that he wrote to the Queen's secretary and said that he felt inclined "to throw up the sponge and retire to his plough in Northamptonshire." Mr. Disraeli used the subtlety for which Lord Clarendon derided him. He pleaded for the "tranquilisation of the disturbed country." He used his skill as an historical novelist and he told the Queen that during two centuries, English sovereigns had passed no more than twenty-one days in Ireland. This was an argument which she understood and, in April of 1868, she allowed her son to cross the Channel and show himself to the Irish people. Everybody used the occasion well, to convince the Queen that the visit was a success. The Prince wrote to her, "I only wish, dear Mama, that you could have been here instead of us." The Lord Lieutenant said that he was "hardly prepared for the progressive increase of welcome," and the Duke of Cambridge, who was with the Prince and Princess of Wales, wrote to Queen Victoria, "Come over to convince and satisfy yourself of the force of that affectionate feeling." It was not until the end of her reign that Queen Victoria relented. She allowed forty years to pass between her visits to the distressful country. But it was significant that she made this first sign of reconciliation under the influence of Mr. Disraeli.

In reading through the volumes of Queen Victoria's letters, one imagines a difference in their tone during the terms when Mr. Disraeli was in power. A certain liveliness seems to come into her correspondence.

1868-1880

When Mr. Disraeli came back in 1868, on the heels of Lord Derby, his refreshing letters must have lightened

the long hours at her desk. "Your Majesty's life has been passed in constant communication with great men," he wrote. "This rare and choice experience must give your Majesty an advantage in judgment which *few* living persons and probably no living Princes can rival." On one line of his letter, he wrote that he could "only offer devotion." She was relieved when she was no longer obliged to wade through Mr. Gladstone's "involved and cumbersome" phrases. How much more easy it was for her to picture the scenes in Westminster when Mr. Disraeli wrote of a member who "raised his crest, and hissed like an adder." The short term of Mr. Disraeli's Government was interrupted at the end of the year, when Mr. Gladstone pressed the affairs of Ireland so strongly in the Commons that the Queen had to accept her favourite Minister's advice and dissolve Parliament. But the friendship between them was now secure and there had been many little gestures displaying Queen Victoria's affection. She had sent him views of Balmoral and a full-length portrait of Prince Albert. There had also been a shawl for Mrs. Disraeli, with a note hoping that she "would find it warm in the cold weather." She was sad at the end of the year, when she had to accept a new dose of Liberal rule. She turned from her friend, who showed more consideration for her comfort than "any of the preceding Prime Ministers since Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen," and she sighed over Mr. Gladstone's Bill for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of Ireland, written in such involved English that she "found herself more and more lost in the clouds of his explanations, the more she toiled through them."

In 1874, the sun of Mr. Disraeli's charms shone again upon Windsor. It was a dismal year for Mr. Gladstone. On the closing day of 1873, he had little to encourage either his own faith or his hope in the strength of his party. "Sixty-four years completed to-day," he had written on December 29th. "What have they brought

me? A weaker heart, stiffened muscles, thin hairs." Ten days afterwards he wrote of the Liberal party, "The signs of weakness multiply," and he admitted that his Government was ceasing "to possess that amount of power which is necessary for the dignity of the Crown and the welfare of the country." He confessed his desolation to the Queen, but he received no consolation from her. The time had come for another change and in February Mr. Gladstone boarded the train for Windsor, consoling himself with a volume of Thomas à Kempis on the way. He went to the Castle once more, to confess the Liberal weakness and to say that he wished Parliament to dissolve at once. There is always a pitiful air about the interviews in which the Queen received Mr. Gladstone. One seeks in vain for a break in her stubborn dislike for him. This time, more than any, except the closing interview of 1894, one feels sympathy for the stern, conscientious statesman who felt his failure so deeply that he refused an honour from the Queen. It could not be, "in the face of such condemnation from the country," he said. When he went, the Queen wrote of his failure. "I could, of course, not tell him that it was greatly owing to his own unpopularity."

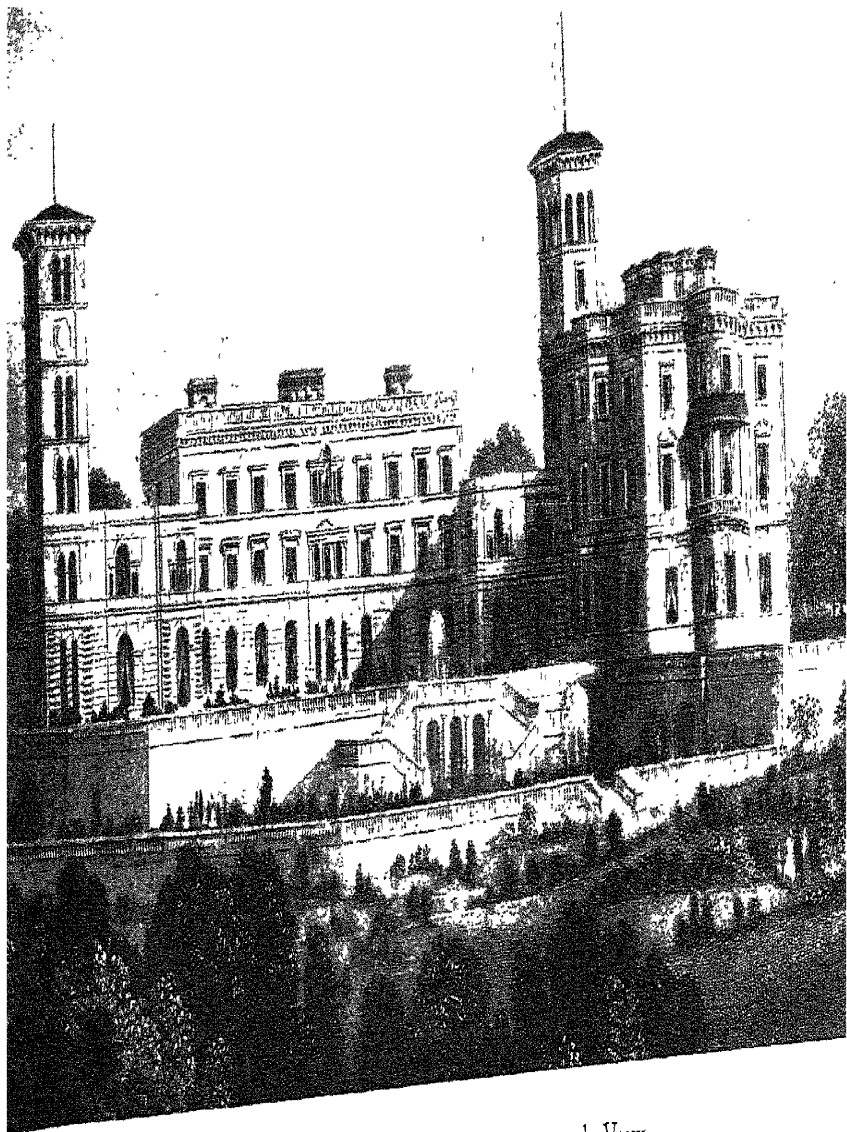
Mr. Disraeli came to see her next day and all was well again. Her self-confidence returned; the essential power which Mr. Gladstone always destroyed in her. Now she was happy, with the assurance from Mr. Disraeli that what she wished "SHOULD *be done*, whatever his difficulties might be." His talent with her was tremendous. He wrote, "It may be unconstitutional for a Minister to seek advice from his Sovereign, instead of proffering it." He called on her "unrivalled experience of public life" and used all his art to convince her that she was still ruler of her Empire and that he was no more than her servant and her obedient friend.

It was Queen Victoria's good fortune that Mr. Disraeli was among her Prime Ministers, but it was also his fortune that he was born to serve in the reign of a queen

and not a king. He confessed that he was not fond of male society, and to this un-English boast he added, when young, that his nature demanded that his life should "be perpetual love." It was more than craftiness that guided him to write love letters to Lady Bradford, Lady Chesterfield and his sovereign, all at the same time. He was incurably romantic and if it is true that he divided his heart between three shrines at the same time, his devotion was no less sincere for it. He revealed much of his heart when he once said, "I only possess one quality in which most men are deficient; gratitude." When Lady Beaconsfield died, he came into a state of loneliness which Queen Victoria was able to comprehend. It touched such depths of tenderness in her that she began her gifts of flowers to him, with a note which told him why she sent them; because there was no longer "one" beside him who could pay him these little attentions. The fair passages of courtliness were not all. Mr. Disraeli soon showed that he was to be her champion in government as well as her chivalrous adviser. In August of 1874, he hurried down to the Isle of Wight with the good news that the Public Worship Regulation Bill had been passed. Mr. Gladstone and his High Church ritualists had been defeated and, according to the notions of the day, England was safe from the powers of Rome. Mr. Disraeli described the scene of his victory in a letter to Lady Bradford.

"Osborne was lovely, its green shades refreshing after the fervent glare of the voyage, and its blue bay full of white sails. The Faery sent for me the instant I arrived. I can only describe my reception by telling you that I really thought that she was going to embrace me.

"She was wreathed with smiles, and as she tattled, glided about the room like a bird. She told me it was 'all owing to my courage and tact' and then she said, 'To think of you having the gout all the time. How



39 Osborne House, Isle of Wight: an early View



40 Queen Victoria on her Visit to Lord
Melbourne, 1837



41 Queen Victoria in 1871

you must have suffered! And you ought not to stand now! You shall have a chair!’

“Only think of that! I remember that *few* Lord Derby, after one of his severest illnesses, had an audience with Her Majesty, and he mentioned it to me as a proof of the Queen’s favour that Her Majesty had remarked to him ‘how sorry she was she could not ask him to be seated.’

“The etiquette was so severe.

“I remembered all this as she spoke, so I humbly declined the privilege, saying I was quite well, but would avail myself of her gracious kindness if I ever had another attack!”

All through his years as Prime Minister, Mr. Disraeli created illustrious occasions for the Queen. He turned his victories into tributes to her, by using the guile which so often angered his opponents. But he never sold the good of the country to catch his Queen’s favours. His chivalry was something separate from his talents as a statesman. It was wisdom which made him create his Queen Empress of India, but no more than romantic grace which made him stand up, during the dinner of celebration at Windsor, to throw all convention aside by proposing her health. “The glasses were raised and all eyes were turned towards her.” She responded with a “pretty smiling bow, half a curtsy.”

1880-1881

It was not until 1880 that Mr. Gladstone rose again, on the wings of his oratory. It was the time of the Midlothian campaign when, Lord Morley has written, Gladstone’s speeches were so powerful that “Men were recalled to moral forces that they had forgotten.” The great reformer tramped over the country, like a prophet. At Hughenden, Benjamin Disraeli was turning over his memories, in great loneliness. He was tired and

increasingly depressed because his sovereign was momentarily displeased with him. "I love the Queen," he wrote to Lady Ely, and he went on to say that she was "perhaps the only person in this world left to me that I do love." It worried him and disquieted him, he said, when there was "a cloud" between them.

Queen Victoria once compared the ordeal of opening Parliament to an execution. In February of 1880, she answered a plea from Disraeli. She would make the *sacrifice* since he feared that this would be the end of his reign. His Government had carried the country through four wars and four bad harvests, and the discontented people seemed to be hankering after change. Two months after the opening of Parliament, Queen Victoria was in Darmstadt and there she received the distressing news of the elections. She came home to the ordeal of receiving Mr. Gladstone once more, with the Liberals in power.

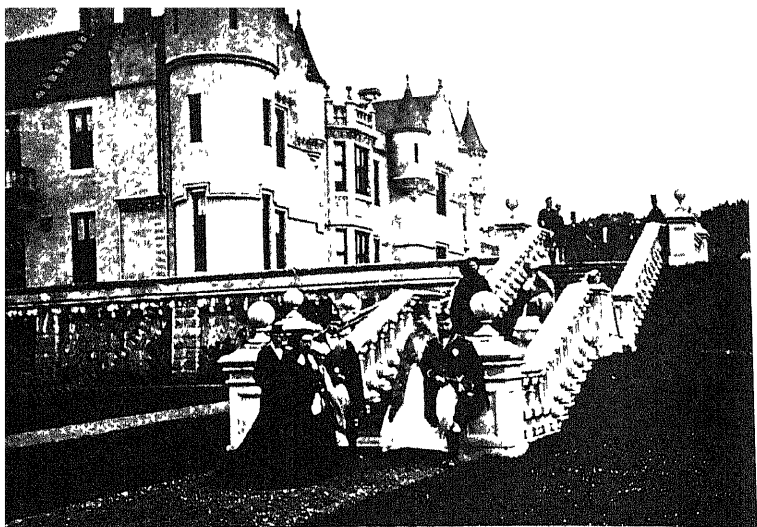
1881-1901

Lord Beaconsfield retired to Hughenden with the empty pleasures of glory. The barriers of the constitution made it difficult for him to continue his friendship with Queen Victoria. Early in the spring of 1881, he spoke in the House of Lords for the last time. The winter had weighed heavily upon him, and he sighed for the spring. He confessed his tiredness to his friends, but he rose to his old and witty spitefulness now and then, especially when Mr. Gladstone gave him an opening. And he conjured up his old spirit, to write an occasional letter to his Queen. The last, he was ashamed to admit, was written to her "not only from my room, but even my bed." He ended, "At present I am prostrate, though devoted."

On the last day of the month of April, Lord Beaconsfield corrected the proof of his final speech in the House of Lords, for *Hansard*. The old humour was still lively



42 Queen Victoria with the Empress Augusta of Germany



43 A Group at Balmoral in the 'Seventies



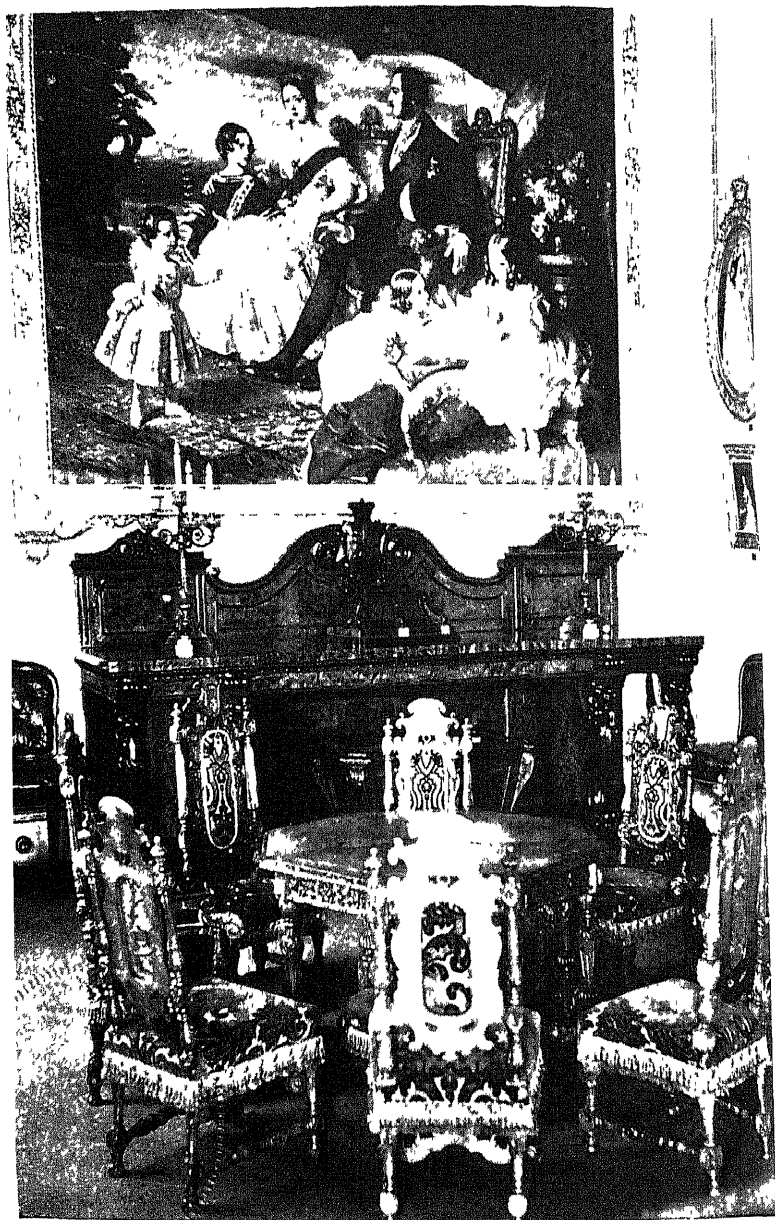
44 A Family Group of the early 'Eighties



45 The Queen, with the Czar and Czarina, at Balmoral



46 The Queen in her Carriage at Balmoral



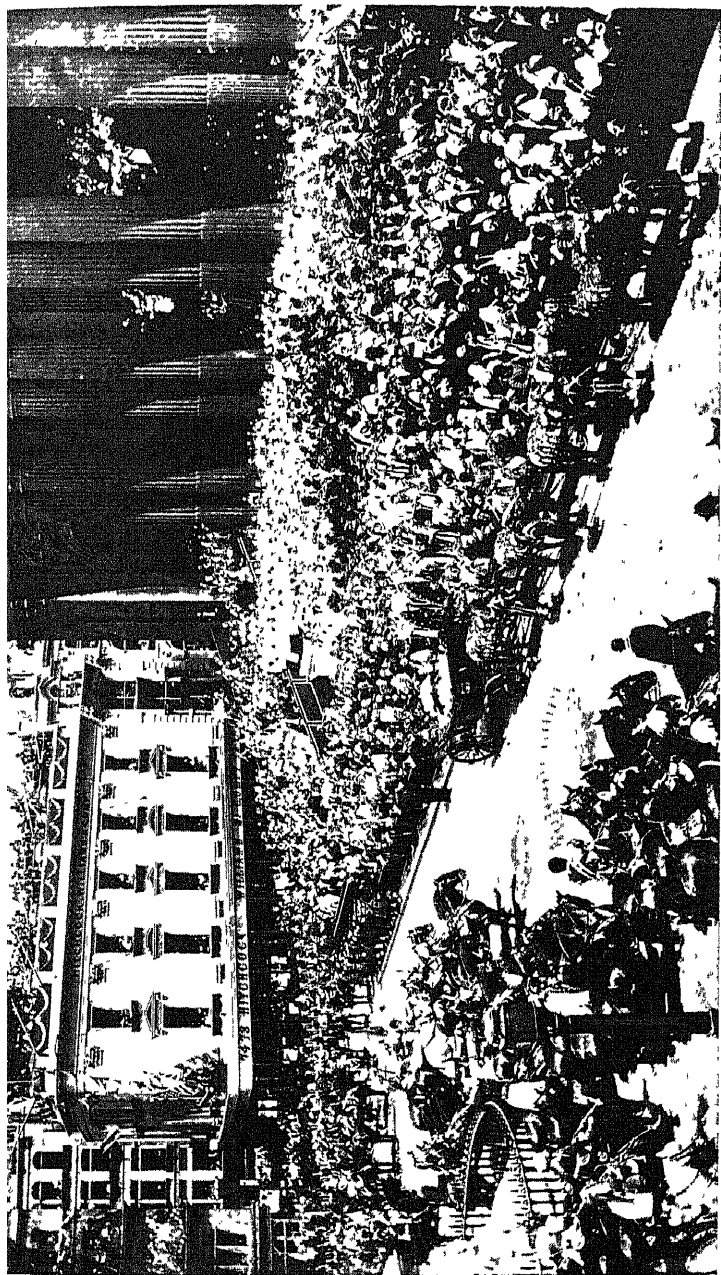
47 The Dining-room at Osborne

in spurts, and he said, when he had finished, that he would not "go down to posterity talking bad grammar." His room was bright with the hyacinths and daffodils which had been sent to him from the banks of Windsor Park. And there were his beloved primroses, sent at the Queen's command. When it was feared that he was dying, she asked if she might see him. His reply was made in a mood of naughtiness. "No, it is better not. She will only want me to take a message to Albert." But the last remark he made was in the theme of his greatness. "I had rather live, but I am not afraid to die." Four days after his death, Lord Rowton wrote to the Queen. He had been present with his master, to the end, and he wished her to know that when he was buried, there lay close to his "faithful heart the photograph of the Queen *he* loved."

There were more than twenty years of life spreading before Queen Victoria, but the trappings of age were already gathering about her and the habits of her court were quiet and ordered. The business went on, even when she went to rest at Osborne or at Balmoral. For an hour or more each morning she would sit at her desk, tied to the duties which had for so long been her habit. Years had brought great calm and wisdom as a reward for her loneliness. It was in June of 1897 that fulfilment and gratification came to her, when the world celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of her accession. The full majesty of her achievement was brought home to her, when she was wheeled into the train at Windsor and brought to Paddington, to begin the days of festivity. The day of her drive through the streets was "never-to-be-forgotten," she wrote. "No one ever, I believe, has met with such an ovation as was given to me, passing through those six miles of streets. . . . The cheering was quite deafening, and every face seemed to be filled with real joy. I was much moved and gratified."

What she had given to her century is well known. Through all the seasons of change, while Prime Ministers

had come and gone and fashions of thought had enjoyed their little day and died, she had represented a standard to British life. It was not a glamorous or exciting example which she set, for it was founded upon old-fashioned virtues, of duty and diligence, virtue and respectability. She was a prey for cynics and sometimes the butt of modish people who lived at a different pace from the one she set. But there was another great power to come out of her life and spread itself through the generations which followed her. For sixty years she worked hard and she did her duty. It was not upon talent but upon character that she relied and, in the twentieth century, we are able to trace the ways by which this character has blessed those who have followed her. She was not to know this, but she was to know, from the beginning to the end, the anxiety and devout wish that these qualities should be strong in her son.



48 The Diamond Jubilee, 1897



49 Prince Albert Edward, 1846. From the Painting
by Winterhalter

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PART III

QUEEN VICTORIA,
KING EDWARD VII AND
KING GEORGE V

1861-1862

YOUNGER people usually imagine that their generation is unique in history because of the gap that exists between them and their parents.

It is an old peg upon which biographers and historians hang the psychological differences between fathers and sons: the oldest story in the world reveals this divergence between generations. The differences between Queen Victoria and King Edward VII have their parallel in the literature of all times. Queen Victoria wished her son to grow up in the image of his father although he was her son, more than the son of Prince Albert. He was a Hanoverian in instincts, with the saving grace of many of his father's precepts in regard to duty. But his nature was too strong to accept the Coburg yoke without demur and, from the beginning, it was inevitable that King Edward VII should go his own way. Prince Albert had found great pleasure in sitting with the Pope to talk about Etruscan art. Prince Albert Edward was bored by the fallen stones of Rome, and when he was in Egypt he murmured, "Why should we go and see the tumbledown old Temple?" It was in tune with his nature that he should prefer shooting crocodile, and in tune with his active habits that he should *bury* up the slope of a pyramid.

When Prince Albert died, in 1861, one of the fierce problems which beset the Queen was the training of her son. Statesmen shared this anxiety and, within a few weeks of the Prince's death, Lord Palmerston broached

the subject at Osborne and said that "*the* difficulty of the moment" was the Prince of Wales. Queen Victoria wrote in her Journal that she "felt the same."

Queen Victoria did not encourage her son with her confidence, and to this fact may be traced the difficulties which arose between them at this time. She guarded the ethics of Constitutional monarchy jealously, and her fear of the dangers of sharing confidences contributed to her discouragement of her son. It was nevertheless a matter of concern to those who observed the Queen's relationship with the Prince, and Lord Torrington, who wrote letters to Delane of the *Times* from Windsor, thought that he deserved "a little of her confidence." He felt that "the pretence to consult him" upon the questions of government would encourage the Prince of Wales and "have a great effect on his mind."

But Queen Victoria did not relent. She treated her son as a pupil still and, following the plans which her husband had made, she arranged for the Prince of Wales to make a journey to the Near East, soon after his father's death. The full story of this tour of Egypt and the Holy Land is told in the letters of Dean Stanley, who accompanied Prince Albert Edward . . . much against the Dean's will, for he felt that he would not be "a suitable companion" for such an energetic and lively pupil. The story of the Prince's association with Dean Stanley is therefore revealing and important, since they were so different in mind and character. The one was an antiquary, a student and an ecclesiastic. The other, although pathetically anxious to do his duty, was boyish in his tastes and rather bored by the maze of historical associations brought before him in Egypt and in Palestine. The Prince's attitude towards the memorials of the past was revealed when Dean Stanley found him sitting at the foot of a pyramid, reading *East Lynne*. Two scenes from the story of the Prince's journey in Palestine help us to comprehend his eagerness to do what was right and the equal eagerness of Dean Stanley to stir him to.



50 Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, in 1858

consciousness of the inner meaning of the Bible story. Dean Stanley wrote of their approach to Jerusalem, riding from Bethlehem to the Dead Sea, in the Jordan Valley, and then up through the hills of Judea, towards the holy city. It does not need the Bible story to establish the wonder of this journey. In any land, dressed in any legend, the winding road from Jericho to Jerusalem would be a splendid and awful scene. Dean Stanley chose his moment well, and as the cavalcade approached Bethany, from which one is able to look over the intervening, parched valley, towards the walls of Jerusalem, he took his place beside the Prince and rode with him. "Every one else fell back by design or accident—and at the head of the cavalcade, we moved towards the famous view. This was the one half-hour which throughout the journey I had determined to have alone with him—and I succeeded. I pointed out each stage of the triumphal entry—the 'fig-trees'—the 'stones,' the first sight of Jerusalem—the acclamations, the palms, the olive branches—the second sight, where 'He beheld the city and wept over it.'"

Dean Stanley went on, "I turned round to call the attention of the rest of the party, and as I turned, I saw and bade the Prince look round to the only detail which would have been worth noticing on such an occasion—a flock of white sheep and black goats feeding on the mountain side, the framework of the great Parable delivered also from this hillside—on the Day of Judgement. The cavalcade moved on again—and I fell to the rear—feeling that I had at least done my best, though after I felt as if my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. . . ." The second scene which one finds in Dean Stanley's letters, to help us to understand the effect of Palestine and his teaching upon the Prince, is set in Jerusalem, in the late afternoon. Dean Stanley wrote from "a delightful spot between the Damascus and St. Stephen's Gates, under a clump of olive trees," where the tents were pitched. "It was now late in the afternoon, and I took

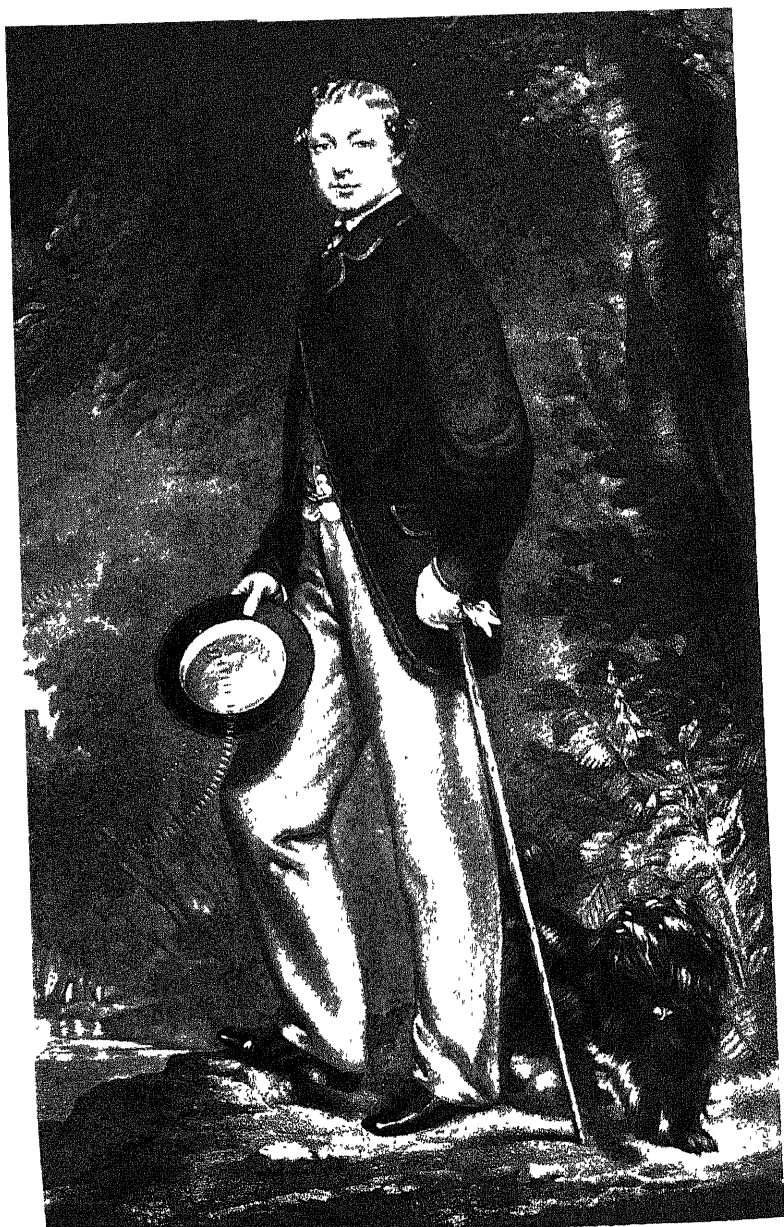
them along the walls of Jerusalem from gate to gate, over-looking the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane. That evening and the evening before the Prince came to my tent, after I was gone to bed, to get the names of the places he had seen, correctly written down in his journal—and on the first evening—the Sunday—he said on going out, in the most engaging manner, ‘You see that I am trying to do what I can to carry out what you said in your sermon, “Gather up the fragments.”’

1862-1872

The Prince returned to England. His father had conceived two plans for him, before he died, and the first was now complete. The second plan was for his marriage. He had not returned to England very long when the courts of England and Denmark stirred themselves over the romantic betrothal between the Prince and Princess Alexandra. Queen Victoria was more pleased with her son now and she thanked God for “the blessed change” in him. But she planned his betrothal warily. There was to be little independence and Princess Alexandra was to be trained in the English way, which was Prince Albert’s way. She first saw the Princess in Brussels. Queen Victoria thought her future daughter-in-law to be “lovely.” She wore “a black dress, nothing in her hair, and curls on either side, which hung over her shoulders, her hair turned back off her beautiful forehead. Her whole appearance was one of the greatest charm, combined with simplicity and perfect dignity.” After this happy impression, there was no barrier to the marriage. On September 8th, 1862, the Prince of Wales had written, rather cynically, “Now I will take a walk with Princess Alexandra in the garden and in three-quarters of an hour I will take her into the grotto, and there I will propose, and I hope it will be to everybody’s satisfaction.” The Princess said “Yes” and, shaking off his calm, the Prince hurried to his mother, with every sign of being truly in



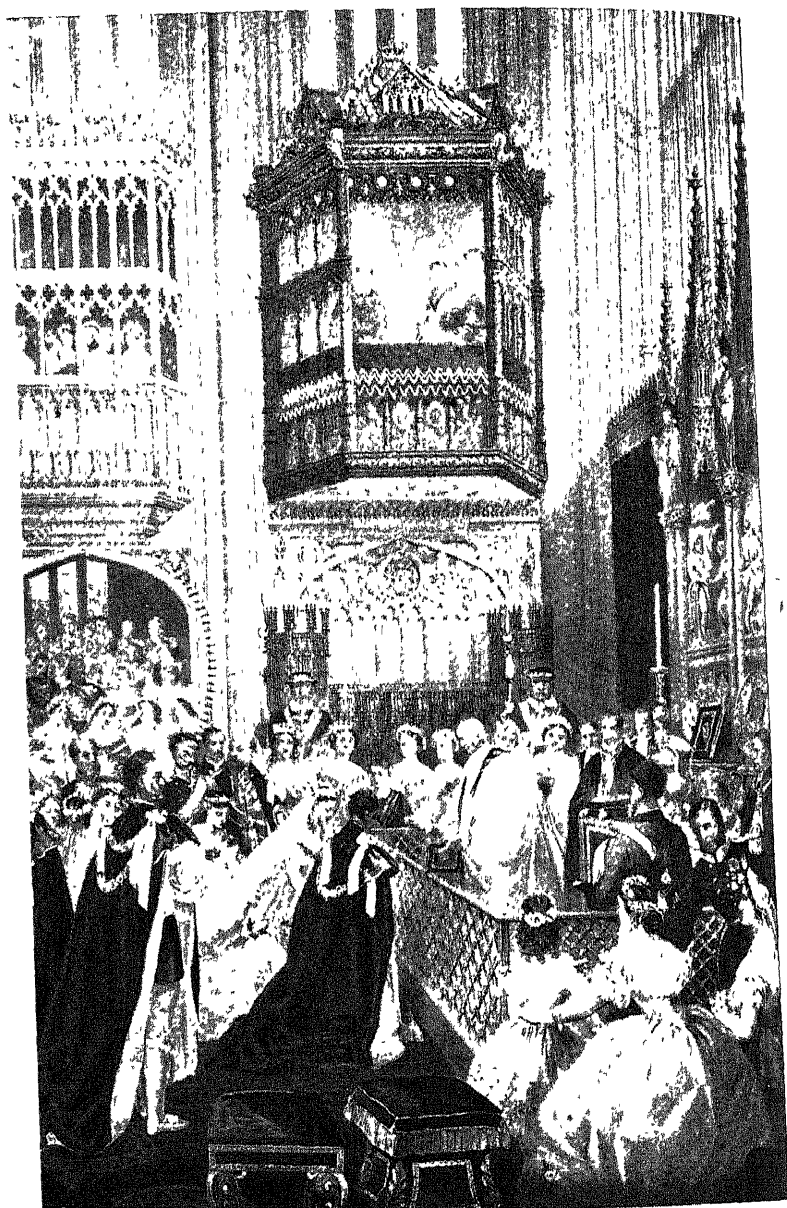
51 The Prince of Wales and his Widowed Mother at the Curragh of Kildare



52 The Prince of Wales about the time of his Betrothal:
From an Engraving after J. W. Walton



53 Princess Alexandra, 1863



54 The Wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales,
St. George's Chapel, Windsor, 1863

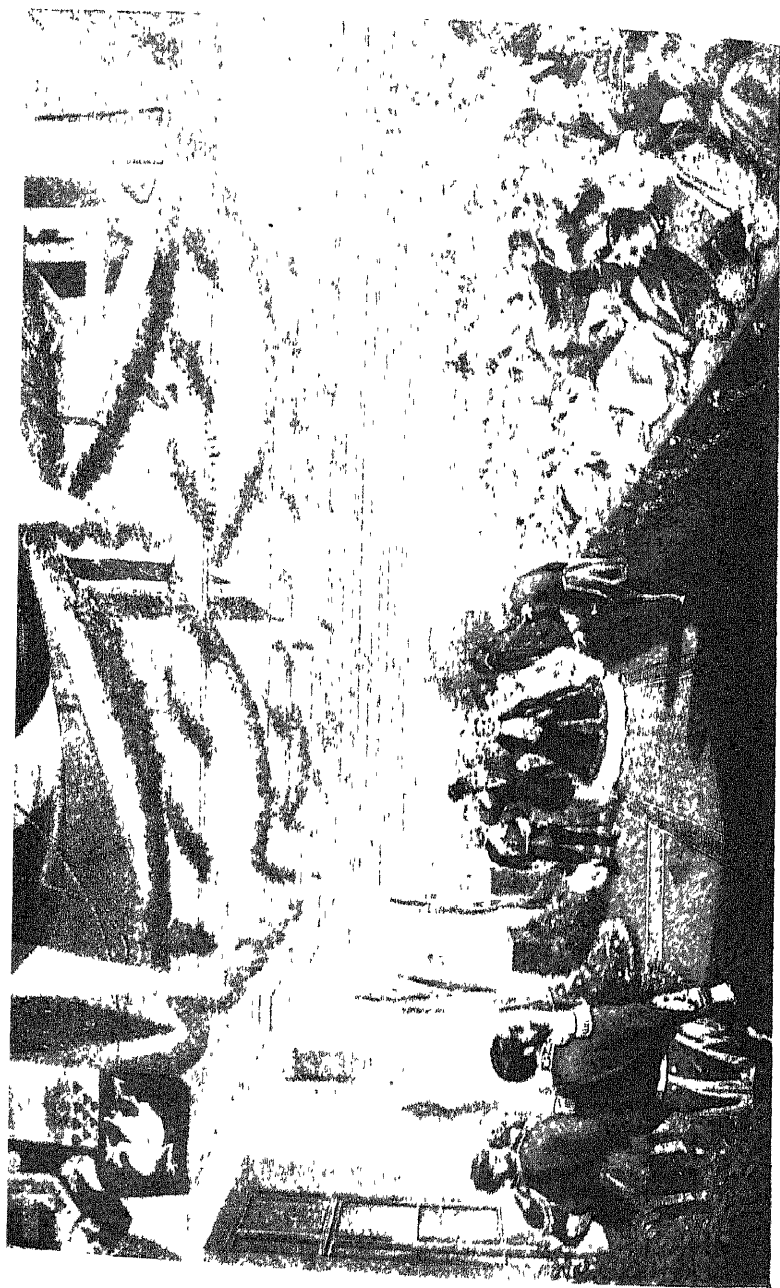
love. One of the Queen's ladies observed his state, his being "too tender and so very, very dear," holding a letter of twelve pages from Princess Alexandra; holding it very tight, lest the wind should blow it away. It seems true that his heart was touched and that it was not outward show which made him speak with tenderness of what lay before him. He wrote to the wife of his old Governor, whom he had always trusted, "I feel a new interest in everything, and somebody to live for," and to a friend, he wrote "I indeed now know what it is to be really happy."

When the day of the wedding came, Dean Stanley was also surprised by the change in his pupil. "Can this be the boy of last year on the Nile?" he wrote. "Can this be the frolicsome creature, for whom all our anxiety was that this marriage should take place, and now at last it is come?"

It seemed that the Prince of Wales was attempting to obey the laws set down for him; they were laws which did not fit in with his nature, but he accepted them as inevitable. A little time before his marriage, he had written in a letter, "I am well aware that much is expected of me." But, from the beginning of his married life, he was discouraged. His mother allowed him no new steps into the secrets of government and, frustrated in his efforts, he turned slowly to his old way of living. The Queen had written of her *irrevocable decision* that Prince Albert's wishes were to be her law. "No human power will make me swerve. . . . I apply this particularly as regards our children—Bertie, etc.," she wrote. She imagined that she was obeying the Prince Consort's will in continual discouragement of her son. A little time before, the editor of *The Times* had taken up the Prince's cause, but the Queen had not been influenced by his subtle allusions to the place the Prince might play in the State. After his marriage, *The Times* again drew attention to the many duties which the Prince might be allowed to perform. Paris newspapers went so far as to announce that

the Queen was about to abdicate in favour of her son. This extravagant announcement did not affect her. She continued in her way and, blind to her mistake, she forced her son back into the society which he had enjoyed when he was a bachelor. Nevertheless, the Prince made good and strong friendships in his own world, embracing soldiers and politicians, sportsmen, millionaires and scholars. His natural social talents drew these people together in great happiness. From them, he formed his own opinions, independently and sometimes with originality. He turned against the Prussian idea in 1864, when Bismarck began his campaign against Denmark, and he challenged his mother's good opinion by resenting the notions of his sister in Prussia. He thought her "too German in England and too English in Germany." There was no suggestion of fear in his opinions and the Queen became so anxious over his sympathies with Denmark, which she did not share, that she asked Lord Clarendon to speak to him upon the matter. Her astonishing and rigid view of the Constitution made it seem right to her that she should direct her son, through a Minister. She had little faith in his judgement and none in his discretion, and his repeated efforts to induce the Ministers to allow him to see despatches and know something of current diplomacy were of no avail. His mother would allow him no part in her life as Sovereign. She objected to "the principle which would be thus admitted, of separate and independent communication between the Prince of Wales and her Government."

This cold view of her responsibilities as Queen was apparently reconciled with her love as a mother, and in 1871, when the Prince of Wales was almost dead of typhoid fever, there was a show of tenderness which was gratifying, compared with the treatment he suffered as her heir. The picture changes. One willingly allows the figure at Windsor to fade; the unrelenting, conscientious Queen Victoria, to welcome the more engaging scene of her sitting behind a screen in his room at



Sandringham, watching him as he dozed or slept. The old tenderness was awakened in her again. She was still weak, from an operation to her arm, and she suffered from rheumatic pains, but her courage was fine as ever and, with the test of anxiety, she seemed to forget public responsibility for a little while. Hour after hour and day after day she waited. At half-past five on the morning of December 11th, Dr. Jenner called her. He brought terrible news. "At any moment," her son might die. She hurried along the cold passages of Sandringham to the sick room, "the candles burning, and most dreary." The Prince did not die, but he came near enough to his end to alarm his mother and stir horrible recollections of the winter days in 1861. The broad distressed world was forgotten and the Queen narrowed her thoughts down to this little domestic scene. She wrote in her Journal, like any other mother who was holding her son back from death. "I was terribly anxious," she wrote on the thirteenth, "and wanted to be of any little use I could. I went up to the bed and took hold of his poor hand, kissing it and stroking his arm. He turned round and looked wildly at me, saying, 'Who are you?' and then, 'It's Mama.' 'Dear child,' I replied. Later he said, 'It is so kind of you to come,' which shows he knew me, which was most comforting to me. I sat next to the bed, holding his hand."

The Prince recovered, slowly, and the Queen seemed to be drawn from her isolation for a little time. There was less wish to intimidate him, and nothing could have been more grateful and affectionate than her drive through London with him, to the thanksgiving service in St. Paul's. Inevitably one turns to Queen Victoria's Journal for the most graphic description of the day. "Luckily a fine morning," she began. "Went to dress and wore a black silk dress and jacket, trimmed with miniver, and a bonnet with white flowers and a white feather. Beatrice looked very nice in mauve, trimmed with swansdown. . . . Bertie was very lame and did not

look at all well, I grieved to see. . . . In a few minutes I followed, taking poor Bertie's arm, for he could only walk very slowly, down to the Grand Entrance. We entered an open State landau with six horses, ridden by three postilions. . . . The deafening cheers never ceased the whole way. . . . We seemed to be passing through a sea of people, as we went along the Mall. . . . Everywhere troops lined the streets, and there were fifteen military bands stationed at intervals along the whole route, who played 'God Save the Queen' and 'God Bless the Prince of Wales,' as the carriages approached, which evoked fresh outbursts of cheering. I saw tears in Bertie's eyes and took and pressed his hand."

1872-1893

When the Prince of Wales returned to health and to his energetic life, Queen Victoria made no fresh concessions. His illness touched her heart, but it did not affect her determination as Queen. Her son's interests were forced to find a new focus. He could be diverted, but he could not be crushed and, as the years passed, he built up the many relationships in Europe and the Levant which afterwards helped him as King. Neither Queen Victoria nor her Ministers were free to travel far, but the Prince and Princess of Wales were able to visit Russia, Egypt and Denmark, Austria, France and Germany. In these countries he talked with the great men and they did not treat him as a careless boy. He met the King of the Belgians and he stayed with his married sister in Germany. He saw his young nephew, William, and a few years afterwards, he went on to Russia. He entertained the Sultan of Turkey in London and, in 1868, he went to Egypt and met Ferdinand de Lesseps, the designer of the Suez Canal. He went to Turkey and the Sultan threw all his Moslem scruples aside to entertain him. "For the first time in his life, the Sultan gave a party. Up to then, nobody but the Grand Vizier had ever been allowed



56, 57 The Prince and Princess of Wales with their Children







59 The Prince of Wales at a Shooting Party in Scotland



60 A Shoot at Sandringham, 1870. By T. J. Barker



61 The First Gentleman in Europe:
a 'Spy' Cartoon



62 The Princess of Wales; from an
Fitching by W. Heathcote

to eat with him. The doors of the Palace were opened wide—the doors into the hundred white rooms—into the sacred gardens, noisy with the screeching of parakeets. . . . Twenty-six guests, including women, sat at the Sultan's table." In 1873, the Prince went to stay with his sister in Darmstadt and there he met the Tsar of Russia. The year before he had met Thiers at Versailles, and he had the satisfaction of hearing afterwards that Thiers "believed implicitly in his political influence."

In London, the Prince entertained all the great people of the day. The Tsar was his guest and the Shah of Persia. These contacts were all of great importance in the training and equipment of his mind. By denying her son participation in domestic politics and government, Queen Victoria unconsciously directed his interests into the wider field. This field was not confined to the old world. Although King Edward never comprehended the British Empire in the same way as his son and his grandson did, in later years, he made significant gestures, before he came to the throne, to show that he was aware of the importance of the new countries. It was because of his imagination that the British colonies were represented so splendidly at the Paris Exhibition in 1878, and it was through his intervention that some of the colonial representatives were given knighthoods, in celebration of the part that they played. These interests were growing, unknown to the Queen. She did not comprehend the effect of travel and conversation in far-away countries, because she had never enjoyed them herself. How far estranged she was from comprehending the true value of the independence of her son was shown in the instructions which she prepared before he left for India. She wrote about his diet and of what he should do on Sundays. Although he was then thirty-three years old, she added that he should be in bed at ten o'clock each evening. There was a dramatic finish to this journey to India in 1876. On the way out, the Prince passed through the Canal and the flags of the Powers controlling

it were French and Egyptian. While he was in India, Mr. Disraeli completed his dramatic purchase of the Khedive's shares, and as the Prince steamed home again, in the *Serapis*, he was able to console himself that, in the meantime, England had placed her handcuffs on Egypt. But there was disappointment also. While he was away, Mr. Disraeli had created the title of Empress of India for his sovereign. The Prince had not been advised and he had to rely upon a newspaper in India for the information. This time he protested. "As the Queen's eldest son, I think I have some right to feel annoyed," he wrote.

Strength was coming to his judgment and, with the advantage of travel and conference with leading men in other countries, the Prince began to show imagination and originality in his views. Even Mr. Disraeli admitted the increase of merit. He had once described the Prince's conversation as "chitter chatter." When the Prince stayed with him at Hughenden, after his return from India, Mr. Disraeli declared that the conversation was "grave as well as gay," and he wrote to the Queen that the Prince had "maintained his part with felicity—even distinction." This was not a compliment to soothe the Queen. Mr. Disraeli repeated the tribute in a letter to Lady Bradford, telling her that the Prince had "said some good things and told more." His reputation and strength were growing and, in July of 1878, the Prince aided the relationship between France and England during a conversation with Léon Gambetta in Paris. The details of the strained feelings of the moment do not matter in this record, but it must have been a great consolation to the Prince to receive a letter from Lord Salisbury, thanking him "very earnestly" for what he did in Paris. "Your Royal Highness's influence over Monsieur Gambetta, and the skill with which that influence has been exerted, have averted a danger, which was not inconsiderable."

We do not know how these facts filtered into the

Queen's knowledge. There may have been hints from Mr. Disraeli, or she may have detected the changes in her son. From the time of his return to England, from India, she changed her policy with him. Her confidence was not given quickly, but there were signs of trust. The tardiness of the Cabinet to act against Russia in 1878 stirred her to the vehement protest, "Oh, if the Queen were a man, she would like to go and give those Russians such a beating." For the first time she drew her son's opinion into a letter to a Minister. She wrote that the Prince "felt more strongly than herself even." Four months afterwards, the Prince was confident enough to send his mother a letter of advice in regard to the impending Congress of the Powers in Berlin. "It strikes me more forcibly than ever that the Prime Minister is not only *the* right man to represent us at the Congress, but the *only* man who can go, as he will show Russia and the other powers that we were really in earnest . . . Now, let me implore you to urge Lord Beaconsfield to go." He wrote with new ease, upon affairs which he would not have dared to mention to his mother ten years before. "Excuse my having written on the subject," he ended, "but it is one in which I take such interest, that I cannot help doing so." The Prince's travels and friendships were bearing fruit, and the fruit was good.

In the years that had passed, a new problem had come to the royal family. The children of the Prince of Wales were growing, and public attention was moving towards the education of his sons. For the purpose of this story, in which brevity is the author's taskmaster, there is no need to dwell upon the Duke of Clarence, but upon his brother, afterwards King George V.

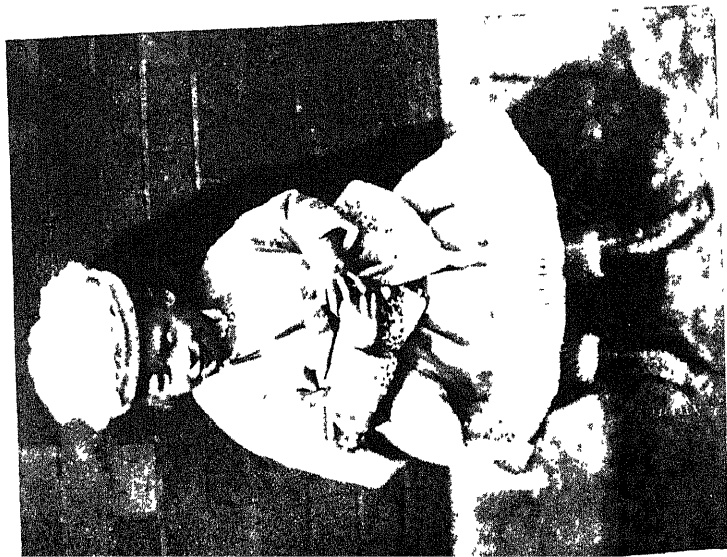
To estimate the character and achievement of any man two years after his death is like judging the proportions and form of St. Paul's Cathedral when standing on the steps. The perspective of time is as necessary to the judgment of a man as the perspective of distance is necessary to the appreciation of a building. But it is

certain that, when posterity weighs up the incidents of King George's life, it will be upon his moral courage and his domestic example that his fame will rest. He may come to be known as "George the Good," like his grandfather "Albert the Good," whom he resembled in so many ways.

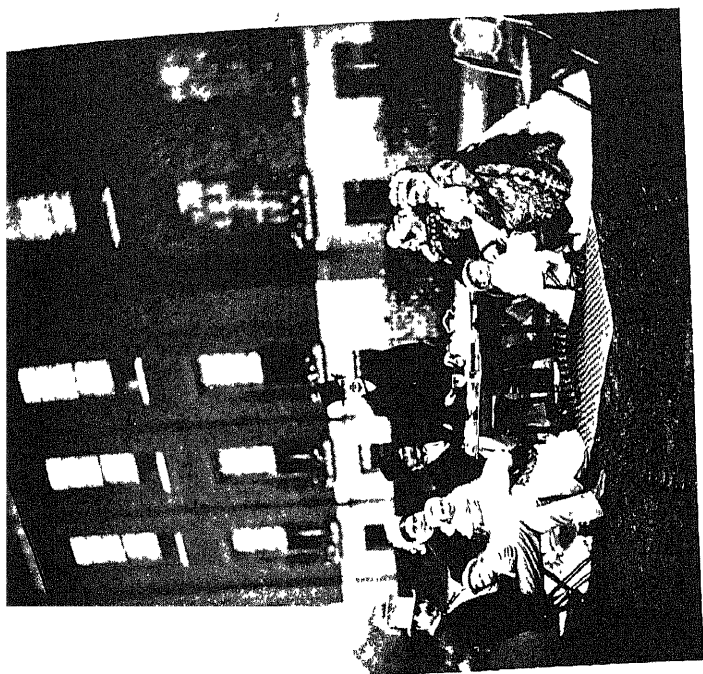
It is the fashion with most biographers to trace the character of their subject through his forebears. This is not easy with King George for, although his blood was mainly German, no less German Prince ever sat upon a throne. From the beginning he proved himself to be more English than the English. Prince George was brought up in awe of his father, whose genial nature never lessened his sense of princely right. But the authority which King Edward exercised over his sons was never relentless or unsympathetic. The healthy spirits of boyhood were never treated brutally at Marlborough House. When Prince George and his elder brother were sent to the training ship *Britannia*, they showed "as much healthy naughtiness" as their contemporaries.

There is one enchanting story of a day when the Prince was taken, with his brother, to Westminster Abbey. Dean Stanley had been asked to show them the treasures of the Abbey. Nobody could make the memorials of Westminster come to life again as Dean Stanley could, with his vivid historical gift. In spite of the charm of the Dean's stories, Prince George wandered away by himself. At last he was found in a dim corner. He had scrambled on top of Queen Elizabeth's tomb, and looking down at the effigy, he was saying, "What an ugly old woman!"

Prince George was twelve when he became the youngest cadet on board *Britannia*. He was conscientious: the flame of duty, which was to be the inspiration of his reign, was already alive in him. But in leisure, he was spirited and impish. On one occasion, a couple of marlin-spikes found their way into the bed of an officer.



64 King George V as a Baby



65 The Teck Family: Queen Mary is the Child
leaning against her Father's knee

OUR YOUNG PRINCES



66 King George V and the Duke of Clarence as
Naval Cadets

A certain cadet was suspected. Then Prince George admitted that he was the culprit and he faced his punishment. His leave was stopped for one week.

From *Britannia* the Princes went to *Bacchante*, in which they toured the world. There was no hint yet that Prince George would become heir to the throne. He was therefore educated as a second son, with the consequent differences in aims and responsibilities. A sailor's life suited him: he was a man's man, and his character and tastes were of the mould that thrives in a ward-room or an officers' mess.

In *Bacchante*, the Princes travelled as far as Australia and New Zealand. In Australia, they descended a gold mine; they aimed with boomerangs and they ate minced kangaroo. In New Zealand they shook hands with dusky Maori chieftains who had fought against their grandmother's soldiers.

Prince George was at home on both land and sea. He wrote in his journal, "After dinner much amusement trying to sit on an empty corked bottle, on the deck, at the same time holding a candle in each hand, one of which was lighted, the other to be lighted from it, without rolling over."

While he was in Australian waters, Prince George left *Bacchante* to stay with an Australian hostess. She made a charming gesture which showed him that graciousness was to flourish, as well as corn and wool, in the new countries of his grandmother's Empire. When he went down for his breakfast, he found a wreath of rosebuds about his plate. They were, he was told, "For Sunday morning and in memory of England."

The effects of this early training were to drain the last drop of German blood out of the young Prince. After his journeys to the countries of the Empire and his life at Sandringham and Abergeldie, in Scotland, he emerged as a healthy, pleasantly insular young Briton.

Prince George's education was a problem upon which Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales were not in full

agreement. Haunted by recollections of his own childhood, the Prince of Wales was alarmed when his mother showed a wish to interfere in the education of her grandchildren. There had been grim episodes in *his* education: the lonely weeks at White Lodge, with none but Generals and aged tutors to talk to; the science master who impressed the wonders of nature upon him by telling him to dip his finger in ammonia and then in molten lead. He never complained openly about the strait-jacket of discipline which had been imposed upon him as a child, but he did his best to prevent a repetition of the story in the teaching of his sons.

Somewhere else I have told the story of a lady-in-waiting who lunched with the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra at Marlborough House, and commented on the good behaviour of the two young Princes:

"No noise or fuss of directions about them. I congratulated their poor father—he said he thought it very happy not to have to be always at them. Then he said, 'We were perhaps a little too much spoken to and at; at least we thought we could never do anything right anyhow.'"

Thus Prince George was trained. When his place as second son had been defined, the hopes and plans of the Royal family were suddenly changed by the death of the Duke of Clarence. The young sailor prince became Duke of York and heir to the throne, after his father. The interest of his grandmother was intensified; she now watched every facet of his character with excitement.

Queen Victoria was wholly pleased by the announcement of Prince George's engagement in 1893. By this time she had come to doubt the glory of marriages of English Princes and Princesses with ruling families on the Continent. One of her sons, Prince Alfred, had married a daughter of the Tsar, but this had not buried the hatchet of the Crimea, nor had it stemmed the ambitions of Russia towards India and Constantinople. One daughter had married in Prussia and had been

Empress for a few brief months, but all that was left over from the splendid marriage was the dangerous young Emperor William II, who proved himself to be the enemy of England before he had been on the throne for one year.

Another daughter, Princess Alice, had married happily, but she had died in Germany. Neither contentment nor glory had come to Queen Victoria through ambitious alliances in Europe, and when the engagement of her second youngest daughter, Louise, to the Marquess of Lorne, was announced in 1870, the Queen had written to her "beloved, dearest friend" the Queen of Prussia, telling her that although "such a marriage must cause excitement and astonishment in Germany," she had "convinced herself of the suitableness of a union of this kind long ago." Illustrious alliances were "good and desirable for several members of the family," although the Queen placed "only small political importance on them." They could no longer influence the Government of the country and "they therefore became more a source of sorrows and difficulties for the Royal family." Queen Augusta was requested to realise that it was "well possible that one turns to such people in one's own country who have independent means and are inferior in rank to no little German Prince."

Foreign marriages had not strengthened the cause of monarchy in England, and the Queen turned to the calm union between her grandson and a Princess already loved and well known in the land with infinite pleasure. The Prince of Wales was no less delighted about the union. When he wrote to Mr. Gladstone announcing the engagement, he said, "The choice he has made is one which gives me great gratification."

PART IV

KING GEORGE V AND KING
EDWARD VIII

1894

EARLY in March of 1894, Mr. Gladstone went down to Windsor to hand his resignation to the Queen. His senses were closing in on him: he was deaf and his eyes were dim. The time had come for his long, chilly association with his sovereign to end. The century too was passing, and the venerable Victorian figures were about to make way for the young. The new century, restless, and gay with talk of emancipation, was already raising its noisy voice. Mr. Bernard Shaw's first play had been produced, the year before. Inventors were perfecting the cinematograph and the motor car, and engineers were already planning the motor-driven aircraft which were to carry the warfare of the new century into the skies.

Two princes who were to assume Queen Victoria's crown after her, were already mature in knowledge and trained to accept the weight of their inheritance. Prince Edward's long and anxious apprenticeship was almost over. A middle-aged man, sometimes still treated by his mother as if he were a reckless boy, he was ready to take the reins from her powerful hands. Prince George had proved himself as a valiant sailor and Queen Victoria watched his growing strength and domestic happiness with affection and satisfaction. "Thank God! Georgie has got such an excellent, useful, and good wife," she wrote in her Journal, a little time afterwards. "Every time I see them I love them more and respect them greatly." They lived in the domestic pattern which she understood, and her grandson was growing up in the image of her own good and conscientious character.

The Queen's chief happiness in this year of change and political alarms came in June, when her first English great-grandson was born at White Lodge, in Richmond Park. The setting for Prince Edward's birth was simple and withdrawn from the fuss and bustle of the changing world. White Lodge had been built by George the First as "a place of refreshment after the fatigues of the chase," and this elegant phrase suited it still, at ten o'clock on the morning of June 23rd. The Prince was born in a room which caught the sun from the east. Through its wide windows, one could see the rhododendrons, and the lawn upon which Queen Caroline had walked, on her way back to the house, from the dairy. The scenes had always been essentially domestic, except on the night when Nelson had dipped his finger in the port, to draw the plan of a battle upon the dining-room table. Such great affairs of the world had seldom disturbed the simplicity and quiet.

When the Prince was two days old, Queen Victoria drove over from Windsor, in great splendour, to see him. For an hour or two she forgot the harassing affairs of Whitehall, the anxieties over Lord Rosebery's new administration, and the alarm over her son's friendliness towards Mr. Gladstone. The old Queen became a doting great-grandmother as she leaned over the cot and saw the "fine, strong-looking child" who was some day to wear her crown. Again, in July, she drove over to Richmond, for his christening. When she returned to Windsor, she described the day in her Journal:

"The dear fine baby, wearing the Honiton lace robe (made for Vicky's christening, worn by all our children and my English grandchildren), was brought in . . . and handed to me. I then gave him to the Archbishop and received him back. . . . The child was very good. There was an absence of all music, which I thought was a pity. When the service was over I went with May to the Long Gallery, where, in '61, I used to sit



70 The Queen in 1900, with King Edward VIII and the present Duke of Gloucester



71 The Funeral of Queen Victoria: the Cortège at
Paddington Station

with dearest Albert and look through dear Mama's letters. Had tea with May, and afterwards we were photographed, I, holding the baby on my lap, Bertie and Georgie standing behind me, thus making the four generations."

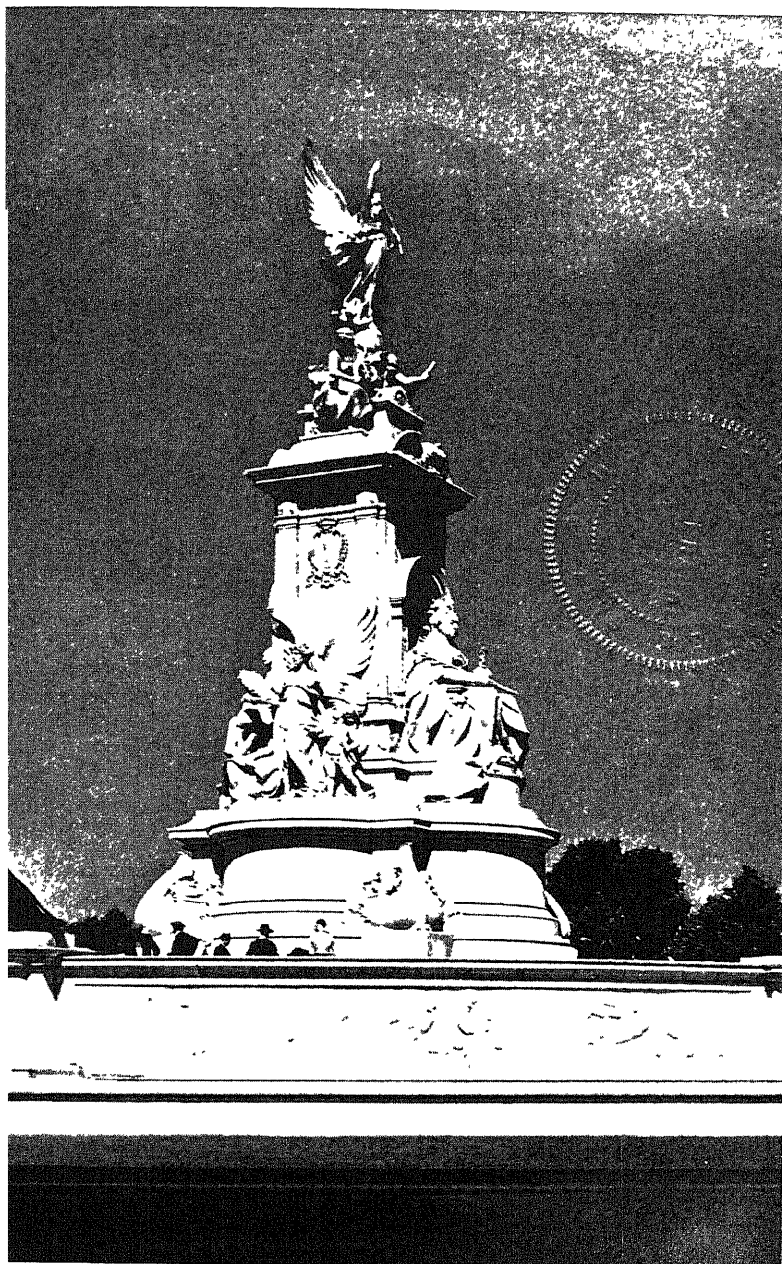
There was one more scene in which the Queen showed her devotion and interest in the baby. When he was two years old, he was taken one day to see her at Windsor and to play with the Grand Duchess Olga of Russia. It is said that the little girl lost her balance and fell, and that the Prince helped her to her feet and consoled her with a kiss. Some old instinct stirred in the Queen. She leaned towards one of her ladies and whispered. But the age when royal marriages were planned in the nursery had passed. The boy was to belong to a time of independence and democracy, freedom and emancipation, which she would never have understood.

King Edward VIII was saved from many of the temptations which are a menace to the growth of young princes. His childhood was simple and, as his brother the present King, has said, they were not brought up in palaces, nor were they "palace minded." The scenes of the King's boyhood were essentially domestic. He was barely known to the great mass of people and, in the gardens of White Lodge, Frogmore and Sandringham Cottage, he did not live in the public view. Shielded thus from the dangers of early popularity, he grew up free from the gilt and noise which might have spoiled his simplicity. The most significant story which emerges from the early years is of a day when he spoke to Lord Roberts. The Prince said that when he became king, he would "pass a law against cutting puppy dogs' tails," and prevent "them" from using bearing reins on horses. "These are very cruel," he told Lord Roberts. This childish declaration set the theme of his early life.

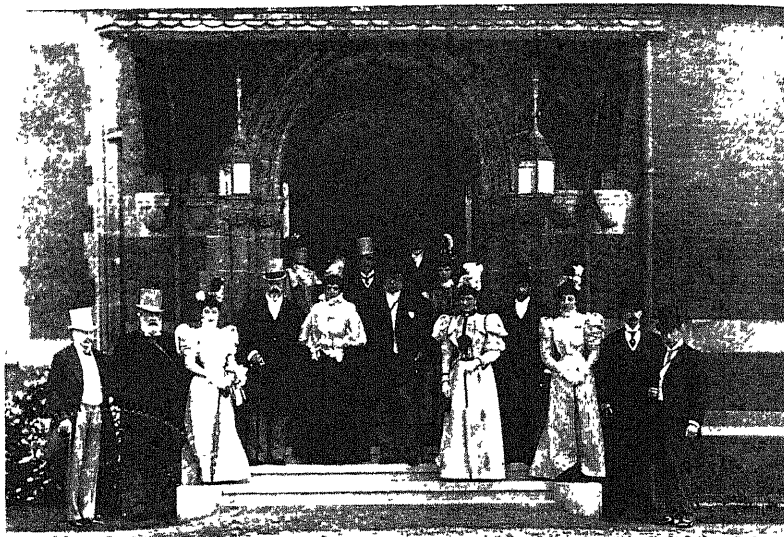
1901

The Prince was seven years old when his great-grandmother died. He was seldom brought away from the seclusion of his home and the fair gardens which spread out towards the undulating slopes of Richmond Park. There he played with his brother and his sister, and, careful lest he should be spoiled, his parents did not allow him to be seen in London very often. But he went to Windsor for the funeral of the old Queen, when it seemed that the world caught its breath and was still. The great, rich century was over.

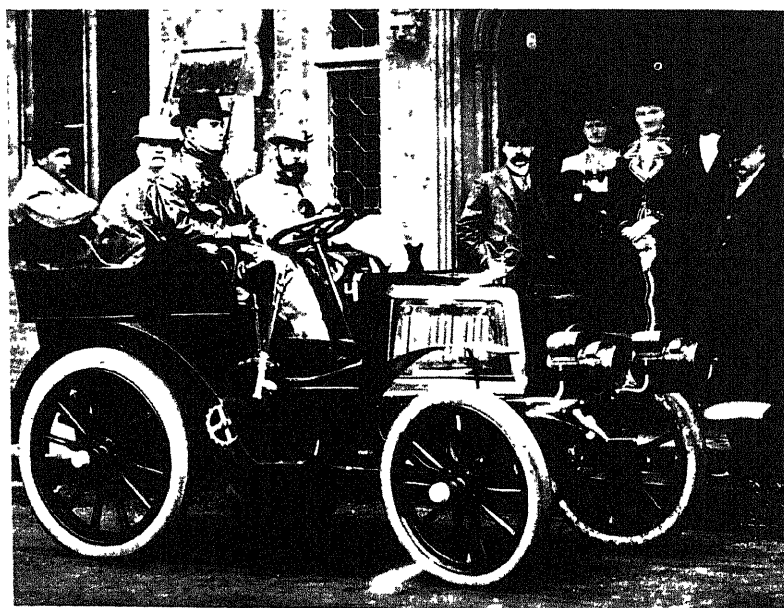
The boy who followed his great-grandmother's coffin down the path to the mausoleum at Frogmore, with the snow falling upon his shoulders, might have wondered what strange fate it was that brought him one step nearer to the lonely, terrible height upon which Kings must live. The Prince was still young enough to take little heed of these forbidding thoughts. Life changed for him, for England and for the world almost, with the new regime. King Edward VII soon chased the Victorian ghosts away, and both Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle became lively with the amusements of the new society. The seven-year-old boy was not unlike his grandfather in instincts. He was also to like humour, music, good talk, and interesting people, and as he grew older he found more and more confidence and pleasure in his grandfather's friendship. Sir Sidney Lee has written: "The best and most interesting personalities in the country were to be found at the court of King Edward VII, whatever their birth and upbringing." The young Prince was allowed many glimpses of this cosmopolitan company, which was so different from the society of Queen Victoria's time, and the boy's experience no doubt helped to equip him for the democratic age which was awaiting him. There was respect, but no fear, between grandson and grandfather. When the Prince was ten years old, King Edward celebrated his birthday with a party at Buckingham Palace



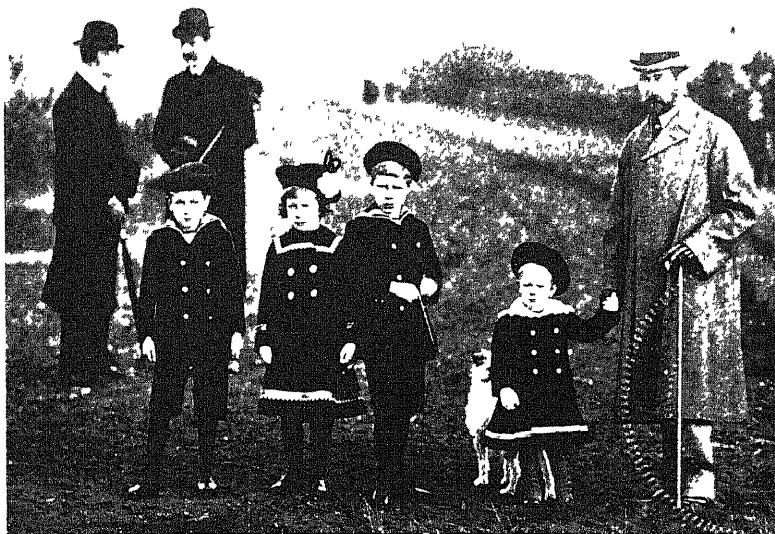
72 The Victoria Memorial, Buckingham Palace



73 An Ascot Party in the 'Nineties



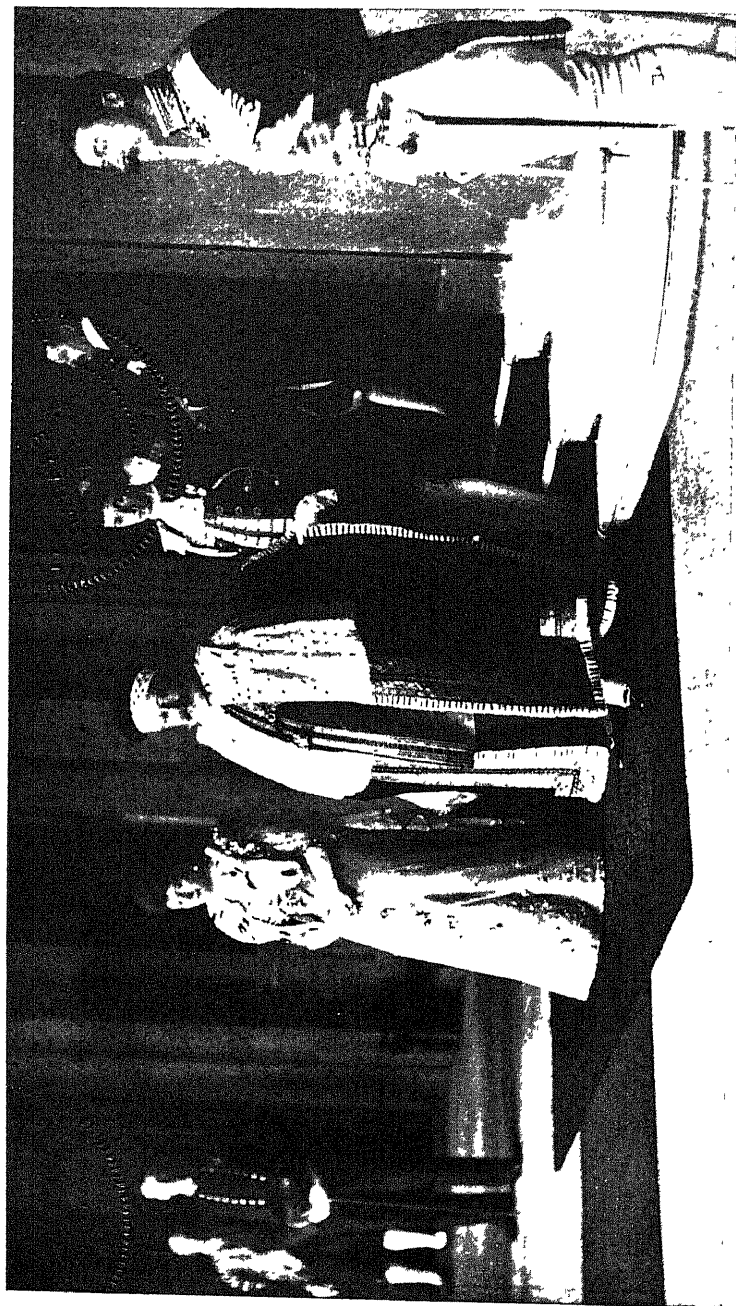
74 George, Prince of Wales, in the first Rolls-Royce



75 King George V and his Children, about 1900



76 King Edward VII at a House Party



77 King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra leaving Buckingham Palace for their Coronation

and one catches a charming picture of both King and grandson in the comment made afterwards. The Prince had received his guests with such grand dignity that his grandfather described it all as "infernally bumptious." The dignity was not a dangerous sign. It did not place any barrier between the Prince and the mass of people among whom he moved, more and more, as he grew older.

The young Prince was naturally drawn to his grandfather, in affection, and humour. There was more of the pleasure-loving Hanoverian in his nature than there was of the scholarly Coburg. We have seen that King George inherited many of the diligent, settled habits of the Prince Consort, but King Edward VII and King Edward VIII were not so heavily weighed down by his punctiliousness.

Their natures had urged each of them to look upon the curriculum of his parents as being rather irksome. From the beginning, grandfather and grandson understood and loved each other: there was no barrier between them. One day when a seamstress was waiting in a passage in York House, young Prince Edward opened a door and said to her, "Come in, there is nobody here . . . nobody that matters, only Grandpa." There was no fear in the young Prince and no attempt at intimidation in the King. This early friendship was a softening influence on the Prince's character, and if he sometimes found his father's conscientiousness too dampening for his gay spirits, he was always able to run to his grandfather. One day, when King Edward VII arrived at Sandringham, young Prince David ran out, past parents and servants, and kissed the King on the hands and cheek, again and again.

Until he was thirteen, young Prince Edward was sentenced to a rigorous education under the eyes of his parents. King George was not narrow in ordering the scheme for his son's training, but he was intent upon discipline. In planning his education after this time, he did not shut his son away from the world or allow him to

suffer the isolation which might have prejudiced his knowledge of human nature and the affairs of humble people. There was no pampering, nor was there any hint that, because he was a prince, his learning should be in a rarefied atmosphere. No favours whatever were allowed him when he left the sheltered gardens of Windsor and the security of York House, in London, to become one of a hundred cadets at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. There he had to live and progress upon his merits. All the healthy ruthlessness of English boyhood is revealed in the story of the behaviour of the Prince's contemporaries in the college. Near by, at Carisbrooke, the boys could see the room in which Charles the First had been imprisoned before his execution. If ever they felt that their royal contemporary needed a lesson, it is said that they guillotined him in the dormitory window, to remind him that the days of Divine Right were over.

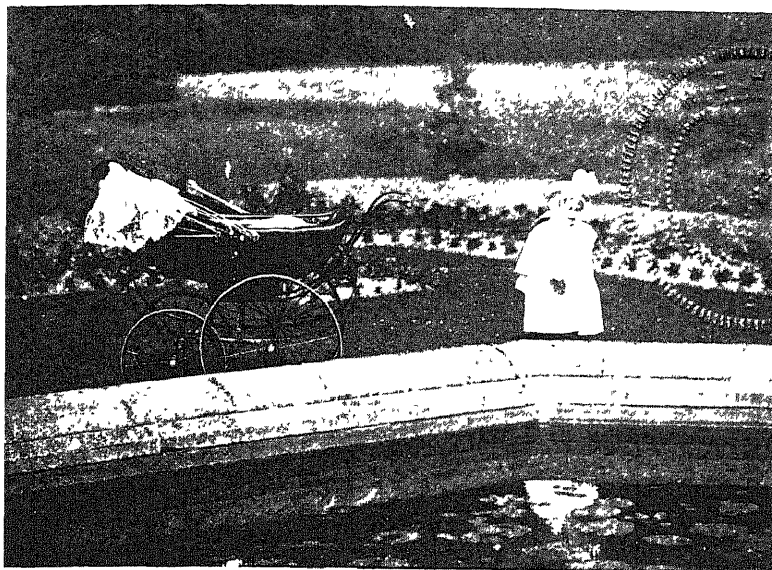
It seems that the Prince was more than willing to lose his princely prerogatives for, when he had been at Osborne only a week, a young cadet asked him his name and he answered, "Edward."

"Edward what?" he was asked.

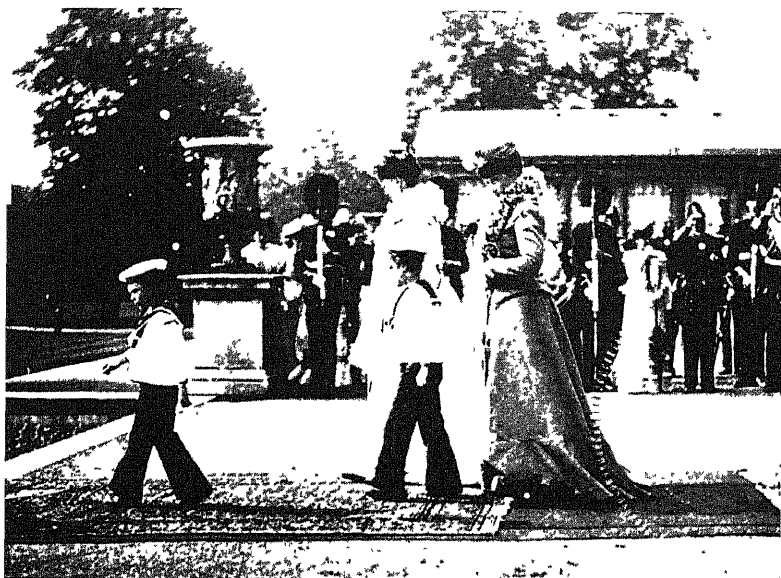
"Just Edward, that is all," he said.

He became one of the company. He was called "Sardine," and when he once annoyed a senior cadet, a bottle of ink was poured down his neck. He went through the grime of the engineering school, without favour, and when he passed his examinations, he was sent to Dartmouth, where he worked hard and won his credentials as a sailor.

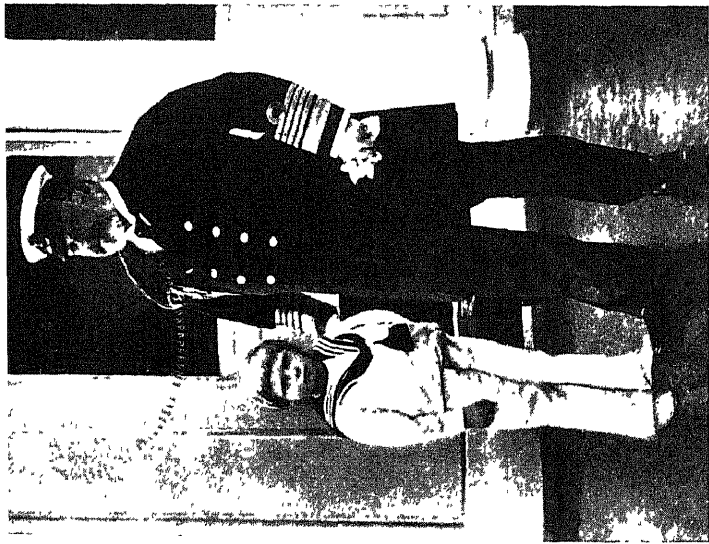
The most important fact which comes out of the story of Osborne was the Prince's popularity. He was eager and industrious. This training as a sailor was an incident in the growth of his character rather than a theme for his life. After a term at Dartmouth, he went to sea, in *Hindustan*. But when these experiences were over, he turned from seafaring to land travel once more. His next move was to France, for the sake of the language.



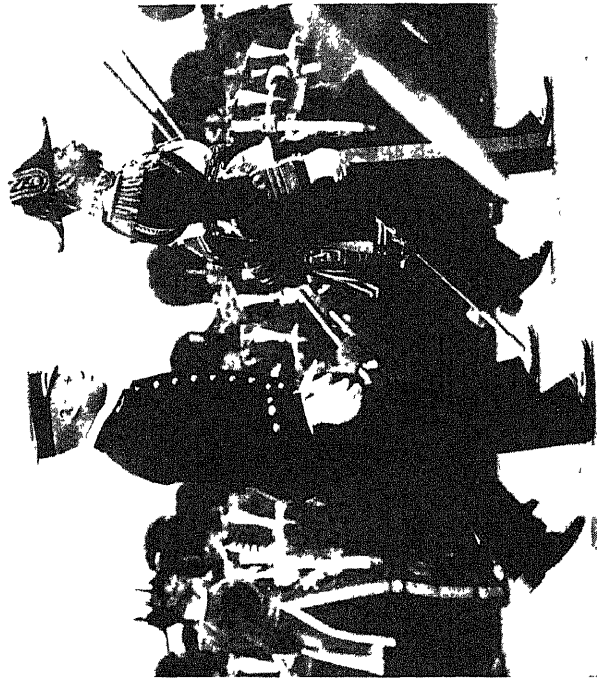
78 King Edward VIII when a Baby



79 Queen Mary, with King Edward VIII and King George VI



80 King Edward VIII with his
Grandfather, 1901



81 King George V and King Edward VIII at
the Funeral of King Edward VII, 1910

1910

There was one tragic interruption of the programme of his learning. In 1910, King Edward died. His short, constructive reign ended. The human friendship which had been such a delight to the young Prince thus came to an end. The light of his inheritance burned more fiercely upon him then. He stood in the shadows of St. George's Chapel and saw the coffin of his grandfather lowered into the vault; he attended the ceremonies which celebrated his father's accession and, in June, he was confirmed. It was significant, perhaps, that the hymn which was sung as he accepted this fresh sign of his responsibilities was "Fight the Good Fight." His boyhood was over, and he was to assume all the responsibilities and the pomp which were assigned to him as heir to the throne. A little time afterwards, the new responsibilities were acknowledged in the pledges he made within the ruined walls of Carnarvon Castle. As Prince of Wales, he held out his hand to his father. The King placed a gold ring upon his son's finger and exacted from him the old promise that he would be "husband to his country and a father to his children."

The grand occasion was not allowed to be more than a passing scene. The Prince went on with his learning. Before he went to France he had the satisfaction of reading a remarkable report upon his work as a sailor in *Hindustan*. The officer who had been in charge of him wrote:

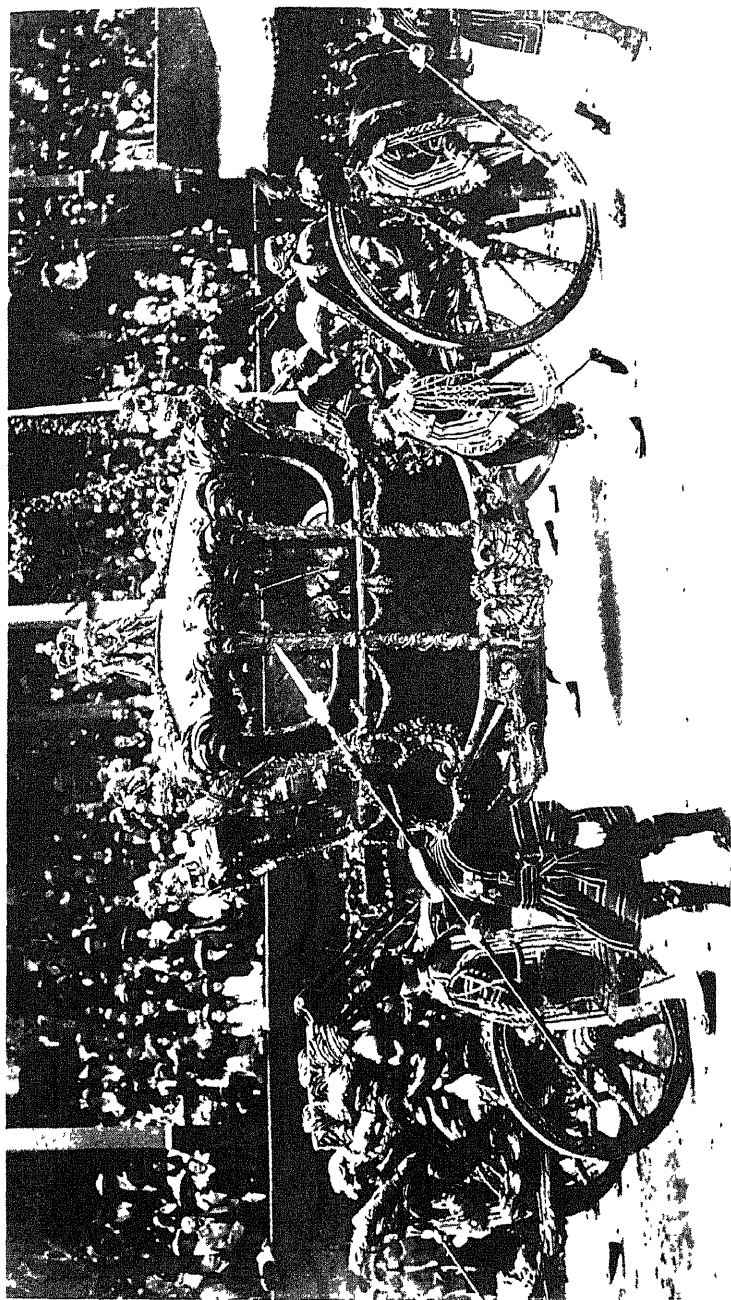
"Not the smallest exception or discrimination has been made in his favour. The Prince of Wales has taken part in every duty that appertains to the working of a great battleship, and has cheerfully and efficiently discharged the less agreeable as well as the most agreeable of his tasks. The day before yesterday, for example, he was bearing his share in 'coaling ship,' and you know what that means. He has worked hard in


81 King George V and King Edward VIII at the Funeral of King Edward VII, 1910

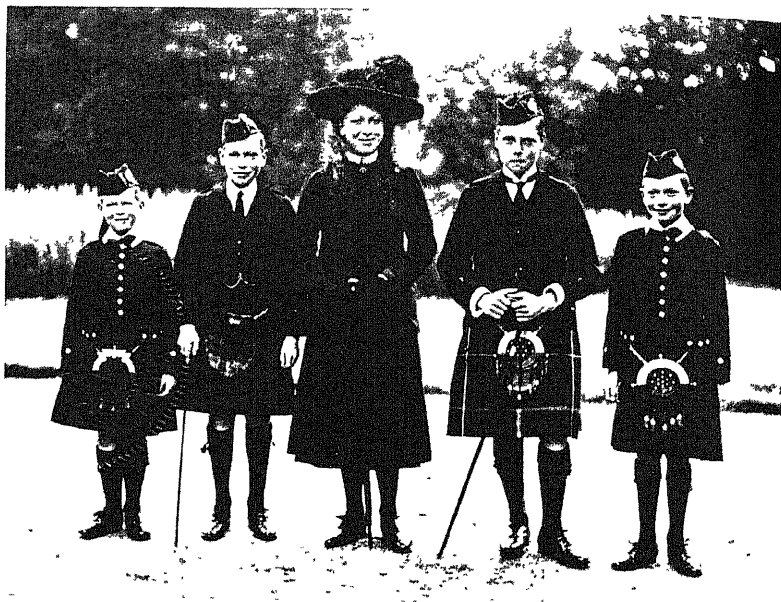
80 King Edward VIII with his Grandfather, 1901

the gun-room and at drill, and has, among other things, been associated with the landing of small armed parties. Throughout the whole period of his training on board he has been an extremely hard worker, and has struck all those about him, high and low, as what we call 'a live thing.' It was obvious that he liked the life, and earnestly endeavoured to do credit to himself and to those entrusted with his tuition in various departments. Everybody in the *Hindustan* will be sorry to lose so good a comrade and so intelligent a 'man.' I say 'man' advisedly, because he has shown application and aptitude beyond that which might have been reasonably expected. He was a thoroughly hard worker, and is in many respects above his years."

France gave the Prince his first taste of life beyond the insular standards of his own country. In time, he was to belong to the world as no monarch had ever done. But his knowledge of Europe was to suffer during the years 1914-1918, when he saw only the distorted forms of war. This early glimpse of European life was therefore important, since it broke down his shyness for the first time and made him overcome his natural nervousness, with the help of his own enthusiasm. He had a passion for information, inherited from his mother. It is said that every hour was question time when he stayed with the Marquis de Breteuil. Then began the great store of information, which became one of his assets as a leader. Like his grandfather, of whom Gladstone said that he knew everything except what was in books, Prince Edward was not inclined to learn of the world through scholarship. He was guided, by his keen interest and his cosmopolitan instincts, to know men through their hearts rather than through the books which had been written about them. As he travelled through Europe, after his visit to Breteuil, he gained more confidence. His camera was always busy; the statue of his grandfather at Cannes, market places, peasants, towns and industries



82  The Coronation of King George V, 1911



83 The Royal Children, 1912



84 King Edward VIII when a Midshipman

were all captured in his snapshots, and, with characteristic tidiness, he put them away in books, suitably labelled, with the same meticulous care with which he stored facts in his memory.

1912-1914

One of the happiest spells in the Prince's life was at Oxford. For a little time, all the world was young for him, and his geese were swans. He lived the life of an ordinary undergraduate, but the weight of his inheritance did not leave him. "There is no position in the world more difficult to fill than that of Heir-Apparent to the throne," said a writer in *The Times*, in considering the position of King Edward VII, in 1901. "It must be with a feeling of hopelessness that a man in that position offers up the familiar prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation.' Other men may avoid much temptation, but the heir to a throne is followed, dogged, and importuned by temptation in its most seductive forms." King Edward VII's grandson was well armed in this conflict.

At Oxford the Prince was able to enjoy greater freedom than ever before; greater freedom than had ever been given to a Prince of Wales. His grandfather had matriculated as a nobleman and he had not been allowed to live in college. He had walked beside the Isis, not with his contemporaries, but with a little court of governors and tutors who kept Prince Albert's injunctions for ever before him. King George did not perpetuate this mistake. He allowed his son to become an undergraduate, in the most human and careless sense of the word.

Oxford had changed. The University of the 'fifties, to which King Edward had gone, with the rules and trappings of a prisoner, was no more. Germans, Frenchmen, and Spaniards gave a cosmopolitan air to the lecture rooms; many students of the younger countries, benefiting from the munificence of Cecil Rhodes, had come

thither to increase their learning; and Hindus, Japanese, and Chinese added an exotic note to the assembly. The Warden described the University at the time when the Prince was there as "part of the great world." All was in keeping with the spirit of the Prince's education. He threw himself into this "part of the great world" eagerly and with more confidence than ever before. His shyness was soon overcome and Magdalen accepted him, with surprise at first, but afterwards entirely upon his social talents, his willingness to be amused and his capacity to amuse. He showed popular gifts, to add to inherited royal qualities. The best description of the Prince as he was during these good years at Oxford is from the pen of a contemporary who wrote in *The Times*: "We found that he was in no way different from any other undergraduate, except that he looked rather more youthful than most. . . . Oxford took, perhaps, a fortnight before it settled down entirely and got over the novelty of having a Prince of Wales going in and coming out daily. There were tiresome photographers and reporters, and a tendency for crowds to collect at likely places for him to pass. But his fellow-undergraduates did not take long to learn the necessary lesson. Members of Balliol signified their opinion of an inquisitive crowd by pouring water from the upper windows on their heads.

"Everything was made easy for him to take an immediate place in college life and interests. And he plunged at once into an almost bewildering catholicity of interests and amusements. He was entertained and gave entertainments in return, and those present found that, though he was at first rather shy, he was a delightful addition to a dinner-party, most attractive in the quiet and humble part he took in the conversation, but full of humour and with opinions at once decided and sane. His laugh and smile are perhaps particularly attractive."

From his earliest days, King Edward VII had shown little taste for established smart society. As a boy, as heir to the throne, and as a monarch, his interest in

human nature made it impossible for him to find contentment among rich and leisurely people. His love of interesting self-made men sometimes stirred criticism among members of the old order who still liked to maintain society in watertight compartments. In this characteristic also, King Edward VIII was his grandfather's heir. But his love for the society of interesting rather than modish people was deeper rooted than in King Edward VII. Oxford and the later experience of France forged a link between the king's heart and the anxieties of the masses. He lived near to them through the habits of his life, and, while he was Prince of Wales, he understood them from his heart.

The compliment of kindness has been paid to many kings but never with such justification as to the ex-King up to the time of his father's Jubilee, when his character seemed to change. In considering the story of the years when he was at Oxford, one realises how his sympathetic nature first found human material to work upon. One day, he went to the rooms of a friend and among the company was a "rampant, tearing socialist from the Midlands who had commenced life in a nail factory at the age of eight, educated himself—and arrived at Oxford at the age of thirty-three with a red tie." The Prince's manner and sincerity were such that when he left the room, the socialist lifted his glass and said, "The Prince of Wales, God bless him." Prince Edward was to become perhaps the most British Prince of Wales in our history. This Englishness was not to be a narrow avenue of thought, for it embraced all the new countries of the world, including America. The history of this aspect of his character is especially interesting in relation to the story of 1914. Almost one hundred years before, Queen Victoria had begun her reign with the German sympathies which were natural to her. We have seen that this focus for affection was strengthened by her marriage and, although she later came to resent the Prussian point of view, she naturally clung to the country

of her ancestors. We have also seen that from the time of the Schlesweig-Holstein affair, King Edward differed from his mother. His loyalty to Queen Alexandra urged him to resent Bismarck's ambitions and his intimidation of the Danes. He turned from Germany for ever. His dislike for the Prussian spirit was fed by his dislike for Wilhelm the Second. "Thank God he has gone," he once said as his nephew drove away from Sandringham. King Edward the Seventh turned to France for his love and, despite the cynics who might say that Constitutional monarchs have little power, the sympathies of English diplomacy and policy soon followed those of the King. The links with Europe were growing weaker. The next step was the education of King George, whose attitude towards all the affairs of the countries across the channel was expressed in his comment on the months he spent in Heidelberg, "learning their beastly language." King George became the perfective example of the little Englander. He was, at heart, an English squire, and his greatest delight was in walking over his Norfolk acres, with his dog at his heels.

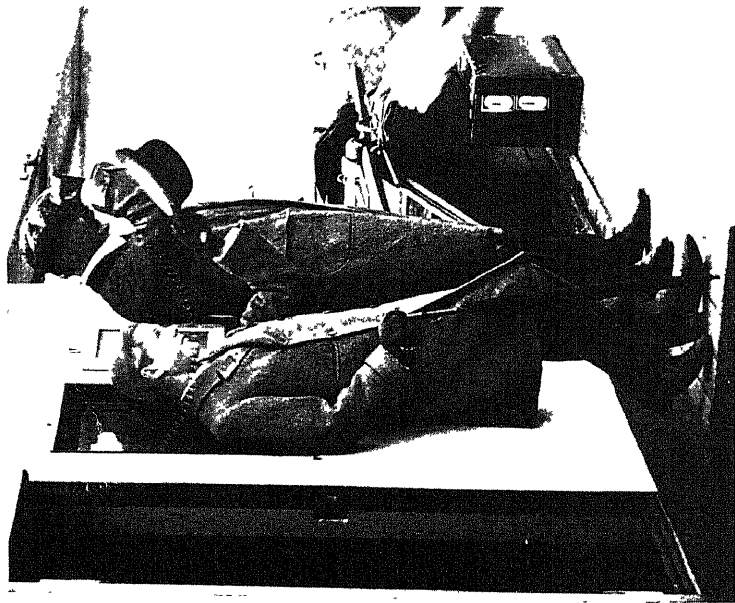
These steps are important in considering the Englishness of King Edward VIII. He did not begin with any tangible ties with Europe. His brief glimpse of France and his few holidays in Germany were interludes in his adolescence, but they were never influences. Therefore, when the war came, the Prince of Wales was not haunted by any voices from Europe. His heart was free to accept the influences which were waiting for him.

1913

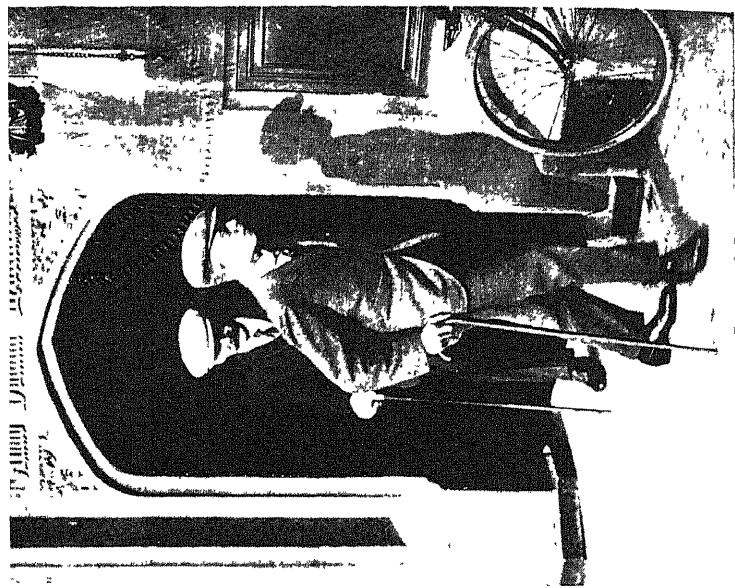
When the Prince of Wales left Oxford, he brought down few scholastic honours. His early habit of learning through experience rather than through the cold, dead pages of history had not changed, and the pictures of him as an undergraduate which survive prove the contention of the President of Magdalen, who said



85 King Edward VIII with Queen Mary and the Princess Royal, 1911



86 Returning from France, 1912



87 At Oxford, 1912

that he would never be "a British Solomon." The President wisely added that this was "not to be desired." He had gathered other qualities instead; qualities which were more important if he was to keep the promise he made to his father at Carnarvon, that he would be "a husband" to his people. They were the qualities of character that showed his heart to be his guide rather than his mind. In the report which he wrote, the President added: "The Prince of Wales will not want for power of ready and forcible presentation. All the time he was learning more and more every day, gauging character, watching its play, getting to know what Englishmen are like, both individually and still more in the mass."

In the early part of 1913, the heir to the throne moved into new and exciting scenes. He paid his first visit to Germany and he was the guest of the Emperor. This contact was especially interesting so soon before August of 1914.

While the Prince was at Osborne, Dartmouth, and Oxford, great changes had come to preparations for warfare, through the invention and success of military aircraft. Count Zeppelin was already at work in Germany, Pegoud had already looped the loop, and Lord Fisher had sounded the cry of the new age when he appealed to Mr. Churchill, "For God's sake trample on and stamp out protected cruisers and hurry up aviation." The way through the air was already cleared and, during his first visit to Germany, the Prince saw something of the Emperor's air force; he saw a squadron of aircraft, which were to be at war within little more than a year, resting on the snow at Stuttgart. One evening he dined with the Emperor and the comment of his cousin, made after he had gone, is interesting. The Emperor said that he was a "most charming, unassuming young man such as one would expect from such a family—but a young eagle, likely to play a big part in European affairs because he is far from being a pacifist."

An important characteristic began to show in the Prince during these months of travel. His energy became alarming to those who served him. In his training with the O.T.C. at Oxford, he had already shown himself to be unique in powers of endurance. While he was in Germany, he was put in the charge of two officers for part of his holiday. They were in a car one day and the Prince became restless and said that he preferred to walk. The Germans were disturbed, and one of them pointed out that fifteen miles lay between them and their destination. "Never mind," he answered, "I can manage that distance all right."

The officers were good Prussians and they obeyed. Only one of them arrived at the end of the fifteen miles. The other had fallen by the way. This quality of tirelessness showed itself in every sport which the Prince tried. He did not remain constant to any particular game. He turned from one to the other, but he attacked every one of them with the same reckless energy. He possessed an eager mind in an eager body and life was perpetually exciting to him, in both work and play.

1914

In 1914, when war was declared, British people were not obliged to look anxiously towards the Court and anticipate any cleavage in feelings or emotions there. The Royal Family reacted with the country and, from the beginning to the end of the War, the King and Queen represented a focus for loyalty and devotion.

It can be said, perhaps, that King George was the one man at the head of affairs during the War who never made a mistake. His difficult position called for tact, patience and foresight which bewilders us. Perhaps some future historian will be able to see this aspect of his story in a true light which is denied to us now.

His influence was a permanent support in the shifting tides of battle, and it is terrible to think of the possible



88 King George V out Shooting



89 Examining the Bag, Nepal, 1912



90 King George in Flanders, 1917

effect upon loyalty if the nation had lacked his moral leadership. Politicians came and went: Mr. Asquith retired and Mr. Lloyd George rose, with his flaming sword. We might have been a demoralised people if we had lacked one permanent, trusted leader, while politicians and generals changed places and favour.

It was at the end of the War that one faintly realised King George's influence in the English-speaking world. The humiliation of the German Emperor and the assassination of the Tsar showed how the royal cause stood among the masses of Europe. The action of the Spaniards in turning out their Sovereign, some years later, showed that the Latin people were no less susceptible to the charms of democracy than those of the colder, northern countries. The rise of Signor Mussolini and the fading of the King's power in Italy was another significant change.

But, in Great Britain, the King found himself more loved by his people than ever before.

The fall of monarchies only seemed to make his throne more secure, and the indignities which came to kingship in other countries did not touch him. The Emperor William is only half remembered in Germany. He is seldom mentioned except among the older people, and when they wish to know of him, in his retirement at Doorn, they have to read the English newspapers. Their own journals seldom bother to refer to him.

The Emperor of Austria has been turned into the hero of an operetta by Kreisler. In England, the position and influence of the Crown were intensified by the same experience which killed the royal cause in other countries.

It was no longer possible for sceptics to say that King George was a figure-head. He had never failed his people, and a genuine affection, in no sense passive, went out to him and to his Queen, wherever they went. Londoners going home past Buckingham Palace would look at the simple stone façade and feel more safe and

contented for the life which went on inside it. He was never spectacular, but he had given England the complete example of what a gentleman should be; not one of uncomfortable self-consciousness, or a gentleman through class consciousness, but a good man, in the way his grandfather had been.

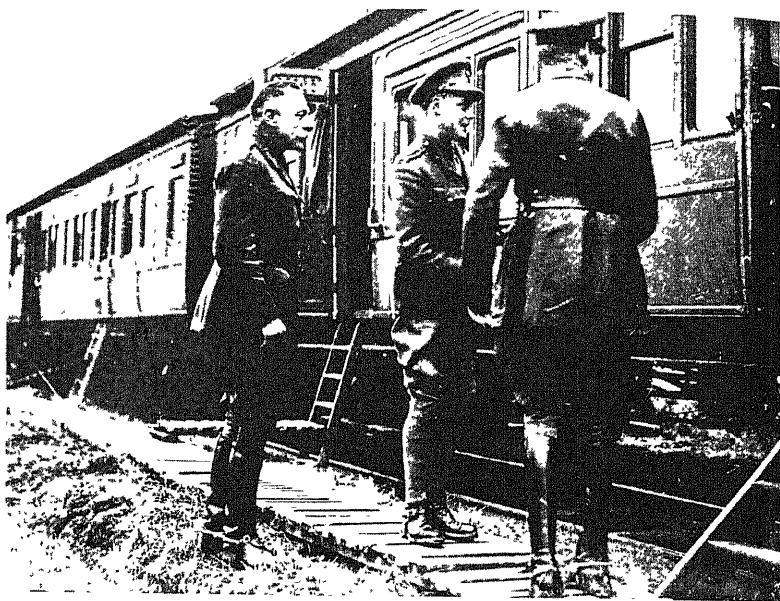
Like all true deep national feelings, this began in the mass of the people and moved up to the classes nearer the Throne. One never heard a word of disrespect. King George had increased the strength and dignity of monarchy by pure character at a time when it had declined into being either a memory or caricature in almost every other country in Europe.

1914-1918

When the darkness of August, 1914 came, the Prince of Wales showed how cosmopolitan and normal the effects of his education and training had been. He seemed to view the War with no consciousness of his inheritance; no realisation that his life was precious and apart. He went into training with the First Battalion of the Grenadier Guards at Warley and, from the beginning, he did not seem to understand the efforts made to hold him back from active service. It was not bravado which urged him to beg to be allowed to fight. He did not seem to understand why Lord Kitchener refused to allow him to cross to France. The scenes of his constant appeals are well known, the interviews with Sir Dighton Probyn, before whom he cried over Kitchener's refusal. "What does it matter if I am shot?" he had said. "I have four brothers." He had to bow to prudence and old wisdom, and it was not until after the first battle of Ypres that he was allowed to go to France. But prudence and wisdom were not his. From the beginning, his presence in France was an anxiety to the authorities. He did not heed this. Again and again he defied authority and once he went so far as to leave for the front trenches with his



91 With the Grenadier Guards



92 With Haig in France



93 With King Victor Emmanuel in Italy

old company of Grenadiers, without orders. Reading of these incidents now, one is able to see them as brave exploits on the part of an eager boy. But they were alarming to every General to whom the Prince was appointed, and his presence in any command was a mixed pleasure for the senior officer who was responsible for him. A private in the Coldstream wrote of him, in a letter, "The Prince is always in the thick of it. Only last night he passed me when the German shells were coming over. . . . I hope, please God, he will come home safe and sound without a scratch." And an Irishman wrote of him one day, when he arrived with a German prisoner, "Never saw any one look so well as the Prince of Wales. He is simply full of vim and has a real weather-beaten look, and is wiry as a cat." Another stimulating picture of the Prince on service was written by Sir Philip Gibbs one day, when he had forced his way through some brushwood, to reach the crest of a hillock. Two Generals and a group of staff officers stood upon the hillside. They were joined by two other figures and Sir Philip wrote of one of them: "Who was that young officer, a mere boy, who came toiling up through the slime and mud, and who, at the crest, halted and gave a quick salute to the two Generals? He turned, and I saw that it was Edward Prince of Wales; and through the afternoon, when I glanced at him now and again as he studied his map and gazed across the fields, I thought of another Edward Prince of Wales, who, six centuries ago, stood on another field of France."

The authorities were wise in not confining the Prince's war experience to France, and he was sent to both Egypt and Italy, to increase his knowledge. This journey into the Mediterranean took him beyond the little world of Europe in which he had lived up to this time, and his arrival in Egypt opened up an interest which was to affect the rest of his life. For the first time, he lived with soldiers from the Dominions. The gap between the life of the old world and the new is still very wide; it was

wider still in 1914, when the War began. The Englishman living within sight of the mellow towers of Westminster did not wholly comprehend the Australian, who knew only great new southern cities and the rude shacks on the edge of the bush. The world of one was old and the world of the other was new: they were almost as divergent in interests and sympathy as East and West. In later years the Prince of Wales was to help to bridge this gap, more than any politician could have done. He spent many days with the Australians and New Zealanders, in and around Ismailia, and when he sailed away from Alexandria, to cross the Mediterranean once more, it can be said that he had learned his first lesson in the Dominion point of view. When his great tours of the Empire began, after the War, he did not travel among the people of the new countries as a stranger.

One more interesting friendship grew out of this journey. The Prince came home through Italy, and when he arrived at Spezia the royal train carried him to the front, where the King of Italy was waiting for him. They lived simply, the King in his one room, where he received visitors as he sat on the edge of his camp bed, and the Prince in a two-roomed cottage which had been prepared for him. An officer who was serving in Italy has given a human picture of the meeting between the King and the Prince of Wales. "They were all the time warning each other not to take risks," he wrote. "The King was afraid of the Prince's daily habit of going too near to the Austrian lines. When the Prince went back to Italy again in 1918, to stay with the King, he broke away from all warnings and control and flew over the Austrian lines. The aircraft were stationed near to the front, and on a hot, sunny day the Austrian airmen would fly up into the sun's direct rays and swoop down, with the protecting light behind them. On such a day the Prince flew off with Barker, the Canadian airman, and they went over the Austrian lines. The King was perturbed and almost angry at the bravado of his guest. But

he was equally indiscreet, and one day he went up to the lines himself and sat down under a tree to eat his lunch. A shell exploded and carried away the tree while the King was resting, after his meal was ended."

The Prince's interest in the new countries was stimulated again at the end of the war, when he was attached to the Dominion forces, with the Army of Occupation. The United States also became more tangible to him, through association with American officers on the Rhine. Then, after a short spell in London, plans were made for him to travel to every corner of his father's Empire, that he might know it well.

When he spoke in public, the Prince said that during the War he had "found" his manhood. He had found more than this, and it was a rich, experienced, compassionate figure which moved among the hospitals in England. Adolescence had departed, and the "hot and dusty youth" who had acted as a scout for the O.T.C. at Oxford had changed into a serious, sympathetic man. He shared the hearts of his father's subjects when he stood on the balcony of Buckingham Palace on Armistice night. The thousands of people who stared through the iron railings before the Palace were not wholly satisfied with their King and Queen alone. They called again and again, until the Prince came out to take his share of their cheering.

One fine characteristic of the Prince was his lack of rancour. His mind was essentially constructive, and he did not pause, when the tumult and the shouting died, to ponder over the ruins of war. Almost before the words were breathed in Parliament, he talked of Empire economic unity, and he threw his energies into a new conception of the bond between the parent England and her Dominions. He was wise enough to realise that while Englishmen ate New Zealand butter and while Australians wore English flannel, the ties between the scattered countries would be strengthened. There was no sentimental nonsense in his appeal. Slowly he earned

a new title. The newspapers no longer called him Galahad. He became, in the words of Mr. Lloyd George, and then in the phrase of the journalists, "England's Greatest Ambassador."

1918

When King Edward VII was heir to the throne, in the 'eighties and 'nineties, he had liked dabbling in the diplomatic life of Europe. King Edward VIII had no such temptation when he was young. He turned to the new countries, with both his mind and his heart, and it can be truly said that he was among the first leaders of British thought to weave and to expound the Empire point of view. For several years, he travelled among the countries of the Empire. Looking back upon the history of the time, in relation to the young heir, it might be said that the task put upon him was grossly unjust, and that his final disasters can be traced to the restlessness created by these journeys. From the day he had been sent to Osborne, he had been the victim of change. At Osborne, Dartmouth and Oxford, and while in France, he had made friends, but the plans which sent him hither and thither, gave him no opportunity for keeping his friends or for making those relationships which are the sustenance of most growing men. His experience of home life had become less and less. Seldom has a man been made to pay so dearly for his inheritance. The Prince of Wales was already suffering the loneliness of princes when he was in his twenties. His background was for ever changing and he was always leaving his friends behind him, to seek new environments and new people.

1919

When the War ended, the Prince was called on once more, to set out on journeys into the far corners of his father's Empire. At the time when it would have been



94 November 11, 1918: the Scene outside Buckingham Palace

well for him to settle into English life for a year or two and to have enjoyed the company of his own relatives, and particularly the companionship of his brothers, he was asked to face four years of sea travel and land faring, to present himself to the world and to thank the countries of the Empire for the part they played in the Great War. The Government was too eager to exploit him, and those personally responsible for his life, perhaps too willing in allowing him to embark upon such a frightening enterprise before he had emerged from the shattering experiences of the War.

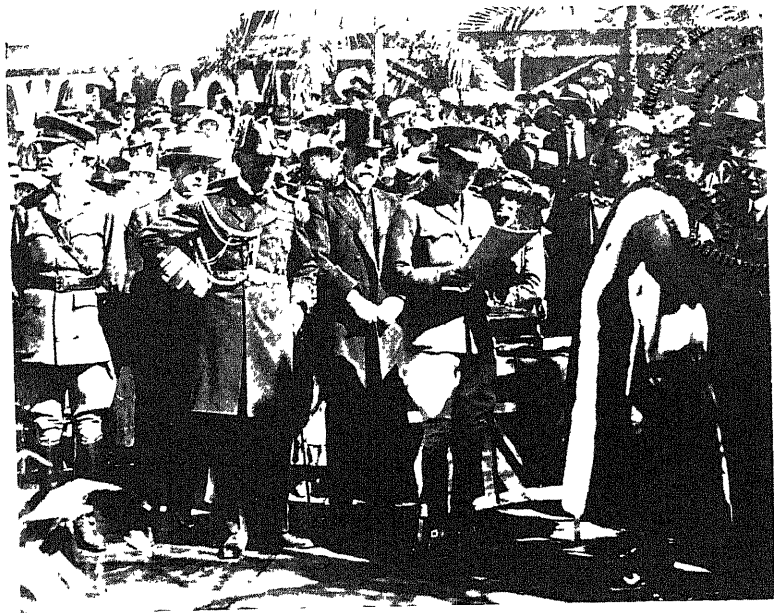
It is said that Queen Mary regretted the plan and that she earnestly wished the authorities to wait for a year or so before sending him away. Her anxiety did not affect the scheme. The Prince was sent off to Canada and to the United States. He went from town to town across Canada. He spoke, sometimes four and five times a day. He delighted the cowboys by riding their fierce mounts and he ate buffalo steaks with the Indians at Banff. New sights and sounds were amusing to him and his store of energy sustained him where other men would have faltered. But he soon showed that the burden was too much for him. This first journey as his father's representative revealed all the qualities which the British Government had hoped for. He was charming, intelligent, sincere and modest. No ambassador could have been better armed for conquest in Britain's name. Whether he was talking to President Wilson, propped up in Lincoln's bed in the White House, or lunching with sophisticated journalists in New York, he seemed equally able to convince them of his sincerity. The journalists hurried back to their newspaper offices after he had spoken to them, and they also wrote of his smile, his modesty, and of the twinkle in his eye. But the impression made upon the American journalists went deeper than this and through the years that followed, until the events which led to his abdication, American newspapers were always among his great champions.

The Prince did not pass by and forget. Everywhere he went, he seemed to take root. When he thanked people for their kindness, his sincerity gave force to his words. He said, as he was leaving Toronto: "I can only assure you that I shall always endeavour to live up to that great responsibility and be worthy of your trust." On paper, the words are bare of all rhetoric, but his voice gave them a power which Toronto remembered for a long time.

1920

Early in 1920, the Prince travelled into the new world of the tropics. He walked down the "pillared aisles of stately sago-palms" in Barbados and then he steamed towards the Panama Canal, where the natives greeted him in wild phrases. "In frantic supplication we fling ourselves at the feet of Almighty God," they said, "to shower His blessings upon your Highness." Then they begged just one more "paragraph" in which, with a "final grasp," they could express their desire that the Prince would "greatly enjoy his visit." He enjoyed everything. He was tired at night, for the days were full and busy, but he always woke up refreshed, with his eagerness as lively as ever.

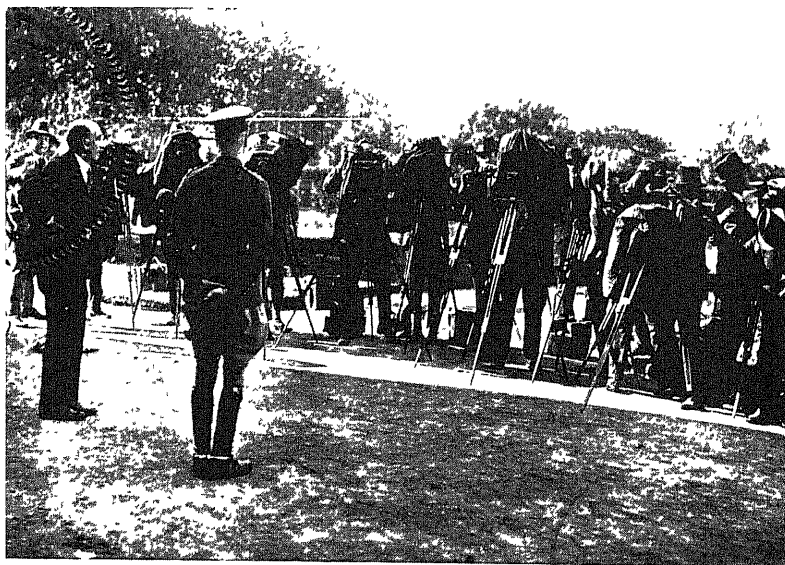
He travelled on, to San Diego and then to Hawaii, where he enjoyed the new American life, and the old picturesque dreaminess which had blessed the island in the days of Liliuokalani's reign. Late in March he landed in Fiji, and in April he reached the southernmost of his father's Dominions. New Zealand had been waiting for him, with its heart in its hand. Perhaps the most gallant tribute paid to him in the new England of the South was within the first hour. Near to the wharf was a group of labour agitators, come to scowl upon the royal progress. One of them was heard to say, as the Prince drove past: "Well, I'm no bloody Royalist, but he looks such a decent sort. We must give him a cheer."



97 At Canberra, Australia, 1920



98 With Maori Girls in New Zealand, 1920



99 Facing the Camera Barrage, 1920



100 At the Derby, 1921

New Zealand's loyalty is a rock of certainty. The country in which ninety-eight per cent of the people are of pure British descent is not greatly troubled by agitators, even when it lives under a Socialist government. In 1920, it greeted the Prince with single-minded devotion. The Maoris danced for him, and they led him to the stiff white statue of Queen Victoria, about which one of their villages was built, as to a shrine. Eight thousand of them danced upon an open field. Tall brown warriors sauntered before him, wearing their feather mats and carrying precious jade ornaments and clubs. But there was another important aspect of this journey which escaped those who were caught up in the excitement. As he travelled, the Prince learned more and more of the country. He saw the pasture and the orchards, he inspected the dairy farms and the butter factories, and his astonishing memory retained all that he observed. In the few quiet hours when the royal train was speeding from town to town, he read about the land. Those who travelled with him were amazed. He usually arrived at a new place knowing its history, its size, and its industries.

The Prince's success in Australia was even more interesting, because the Australians are more independent by nature than the New Zealanders, and they do not accept English ideas without criticism. They are more experimental in government, and, as one of their newspapers said when the Prince arrived, the country had grown apathetic about "crowns, thrones, and all this monarchy business." The Prince realised the difference between New Zealand and Australia; the realisation crept into a speech when he returned to England. He said: "We must do our utmost to . . . appreciate their point of view." If it is true that Australians had become apathetic about "this monarchy business," it is also true that the Prince gave them a new conception of royalty, and that this helped a great deal towards stimulating understanding between the old and the new countries.

The men that the Prince met were different. Chief among them was the dynamic little politician, Mr. W. M. Hughes. Next came Mr. Storey, described as "red all through." The Prince's victory over Storey was truly astonishing. Up to his death, the fanatical Socialist never ceased to speak with sentimental affection for the Prince.

One of his chief conquests was over the Australian Press. The reporters made the first protest when the Prince was exhausted by the unending programmes. "Human strength is unequal to the tasks which have been set," one of the reporters wrote. They demanded rest for him, as if they were his champions, and as the days passed they insisted on the officials cancelling part of the programme. It was a reporter who noticed his hand, swollen from shaking, and it was a reporter who suggested the additional arch which was erected on the wharf for him to walk under as he went on board *Renown*. The words "Australia is proud of you" were emblazoned on it.

An incident towards the end of the Australian visit sealed their good opinion of the Prince. While he was travelling in the West, two of the carriages of the train overturned . . . one of them containing the royal guest. When the train stopped, terrified officials hurried back to the overturned carriage. One by one the Prince's staff crept out of the windows. Some of them were hurt and one had his shin badly cut. The Prince was last to appear because, he explained, he had stayed behind to gather up his papers. Now, his talent showed itself to the full. He soothed the anxious officials by smiling and thanking them for having arranged at least one excitement which was not in the official programme. When he arrived in Perth, a little late for luncheon, he apologised, but said nothing of the reason for the delay.

From Australia, the Prince went once more to the South Sea Islands, and one afternoon he climbed Mount Vaea, in Samoa, where Robert Louis Stevenson is buried. Stevenson had been able to escape; he had been allowed to spin dreams in quiet places. But the Prince had to



101 Among the Yorkshire Unemployed, 1933



102 At a Christmas Party of the 'Not Forgotten' Association, 192



hurry back to a life which allowed him little time for dreaming. He crossed the Equator once more, he steamed through the Panama Canal, and came to Trinidad and then to British Guiana. At Castries he climbed still another hill, upon which his ancestor, the Duke of Kent, had raised the British flag one hundred and twenty years before. The Prince paused in the Bermudas, and on October 11th he steamed into a thick fog which hung over Portsmouth, with one more chapter added to his achievement.

The speeches which the Prince made when he returned to England soon showed the extent of his growth during his journeys abroad. He spoke with more authority. Institutions which had once sought his patronage because of his name, now called upon him for practical help. This was given, in tune with his declaration: "We are a people of common sense." He became more and more alarmed over the fate of the returned soldiers, but it was never in sentimental phrases or grand appeals to emotion that he stirred the people to their duty. They were tired of war, and it was natural that they should turn from every sign and every memory of it. But the Prince kept the cause of the returned and wounded men for ever alive. When he spoke at the Mansion House, he said: "In six days we are celebrating the second anniversary of Armistice Day, when the whole nation will pay a tribute to the glorious dead. This tribute, however, must not end there . . . some 20,000 officers, 20,000 disabled and 250,000 fit men are seeking work. . . . It is up to us. . . ."

His words were still simple. He had not fallen into any of the tricks of the professional speaker who spins phrases. When he said: "I want all ex-Service men throughout the Empire to look upon me as a comrade," he was making a solemn promise, which he intended to keep.

1921

While the Prince's English life was taking shape and while he was gathering his interests about him, the Government was weaving new plans for him. He was to attempt the conquest of India. In October of 1921 he set out upon his journey of forty-one thousand miles, to travel by ship, by train, by motor-car, and by elephant. The British Government was asking a tremendous service of the heir to the throne. In India, Ghandi was organising his attacks upon the British Raj. His brilliant, undisciplined brain was conceiving a thousand plans to destroy the effect of the Prince's visit. The Prince's naïve plea, as he stood at the Gates of India, revealed his own anxiety. "I want you to know me and I want to know you," he said. "I want to grasp your difficulties and to understand your aspirations. . . . I feel some awe at the difficulty which I may experience in getting to know India."

This speech was made on the shores of Bombay. In another part of the city, Gandhi was burning foreign clothes, in public. He had urged the people to stay within their houses so that the streets would be empty. As the Prince travelled through India, he came up against this frustration again and again. His own charm and will-power had to fight against Gandhi's diabolical cleverness. The battle was between the mind of a gifted intriguer and the heart of a simple, sincere man. Sometimes the honours went to one, and sometimes to the other. But the last night in Bombay was a revelation, in the Prince's favour. We are able to turn to the record of an American, Miss Katherine Mayo, for this extraordinary picture of the Prince's departure. His car left Government House for the railway station and it passed between lines of policemen. "Behind that cordon pressed the people—the common, poor people of the countryside, in their uncountable thousands; pressed and pressed until, with the railway station yet half a mile away, the police line bent and broke beneath the strain.

"Instantly the crowd surged in, closing around the car, shouting, fighting each to work nearer—nearer still. What would they do? What was their temper?"

"The police tried valiantly to form again around the car. Moving at a crawl, quite unprotected now, through an almost solid mass of shouting humanity, it won through to the railway station at last."

The dramatic moment came when the Prince was safe within the station with the officials. He asked, "How much time left?"

"Three minutes," he was told.

The Prince said: "Then drop these barriers and let the people in."

"Like the sweep of a river in flood, the interminable multitudes rolled in and shouted and adored and laughed and wept, and, when the train started, ran alongside the royal carriage till they could run no more."

It was amid such strange scenes as this that the Prince made his way through India. Golden elephants paraded before him in Baroda, and at Udaipur, the town of palaces, he was carried into the banqueting hall on a golden chair, accompanied by torch-bearers. From city to city he went, and across the great deserts towards the north, where he was surrounded by the glory of the Native States. But when he came south again, across the Ganges and to Lucknow, Gandhi's voice was heard once more. The Mahatma's chief success was at Allahabad. The shops were closed and the streets were empty when the Prince arrived. But human curiosity and the Indian's love of show were stronger than Gandhi's arguments and theories, and, as night came, the little shop-doors opened and the occupants crept out to see the Prince drive by. He went to Benares and then to shoot big game on the Nepal border. Perhaps the most significant proof of his success in Calcutta was written three months afterwards, by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal. Even when the Prince had long crossed the ocean, when the flags and the decorations were put

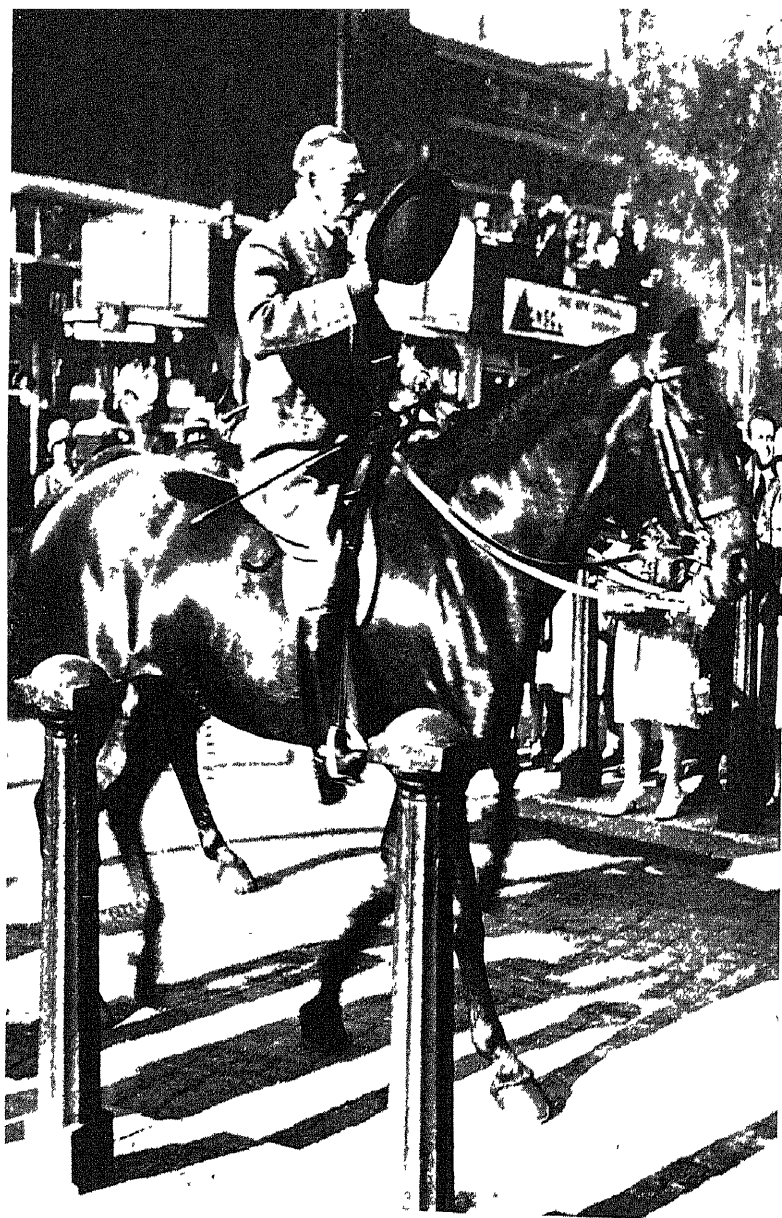
away, the official said that there was "a marked improvement in the political situation."

Everywhere he went, he left a trail of satisfaction among loyal people. The insurgents grumbled and the anti-British newspapers received him coldly, but there was no doubt that his visit was a political as well as a social success. Ten weeks after he left Rangoon, the Chief Secretary reported that the seditious movement, which had been so strong before the visit, had not recovered "the prestige it had lost" by the success of the tour.

The next stage of the journey was to Madras and then to Karachi. Gandhi's fierce antagonism did not abate; in almost every place there were counter-demonstrations to mar the happy scenes. But the Prince always won in the end. Again and again he would perform some gracious act or prove his fearlessness, so that the reluctant Indians were forced to join in the general approval. At Madras, where a cinema had been fired and where the streets had to be cleared at the point of the bayonet, he astonished everybody at the races by leaving the stand and strolling into the public enclosure. It is said that the mass of people were so amazed that they fell back and made way for him. Then they also cheered.

The political temper mixed strangely with the sumptuousness. In Mysore, the Prince sat upon a gold throne, beside the Maharaja, and when he drove through the streets he passed under arches ornamented with peacocks and doves. He went on to Hyderabad, to Nagpur, to Indore, and then to the Court of the Begum of Bhopal. No scene or thought could have been more happy. The Begum chose the day to make liberal concessions to her subjects. They were "to participate in the moulding of 'their' destinies." In her speech the Begum showed human understanding of the strain which was being put upon her guest, and when she had finished her announcement she said: "I will bring my imagination down from





105 The Morning Ride in London

the giddy heights of politics to the pleasanter ground of the forests." He was not to be weighed down with too many ceremonies, and for three days he went off to shoot in her jungle.

From Bhopal the Prince travelled to Gwalior, where he rode upon a jewelled elephant which was a hundred years old. At Agra gloom settled on the party, for Gandhi had succeeded in closing the shops and in placarding the town with his signs, "No welcome to the Prince." But there was compensation at Delhi, where he entered the city "amidst a hurricane of cheers." Lord Rawlinson was among those who greeted him and he wrote in his Journal: "The Prince's visit has gone off splendidly, which is a tremendous relief. He has worked very hard. . . . His winning smile and extraordinarily attractive manner won the hearts of all. He had another great success with a speech in Hindustani, which he learned by heart, to the 11th and 12th Rajputs, to whom he presented colours. The men were delighted and cheered him to the echo."

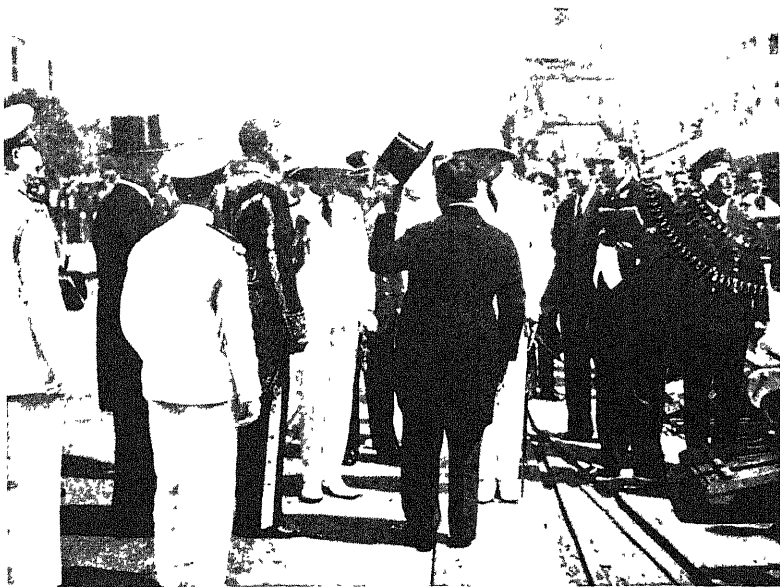
The Prince's gifts for gaining immediate popularity did not seem to weaken. He admitted that he went to bed "dog-tired" at night, but he went on, and towards the end of his stay in India he performed one graceful and compassionate act which has never been forgotten. He was driving when he came upon an encampment in which there were twenty-five thousand Untouchables. Their spokesman came to him in great humility. Would he intervene on their behalf? One movement made him their hero for ever—he stood up as the man bowed before him. We are able to turn once more to an official report to find the effect of this kindness. The Chief Commissioner of Delhi wrote: "I am informed by non-official workers among these depressed classes that this recognition has had a most remarkable effect in stimulating their self-respect and in strengthening their determination to lift themselves out of the thralldom which custom and caste regulations have hitherto assigned to their lot." A

good achievement hides within this cold and official comment.

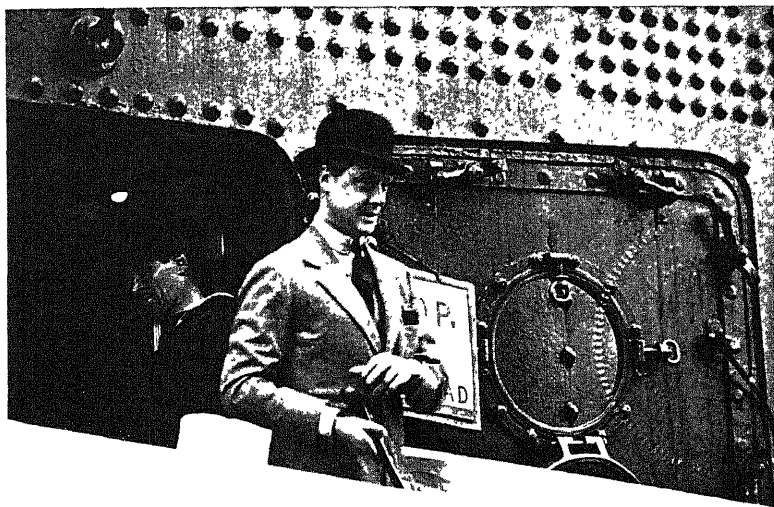
Patiala, Jullundur, and Lahore followed. Aircraft, tanks, armed infantry, and armoured cars had been brought out to intimidate Gandhi's followers in Lahore. It is said that the Prince's simplicity "loosened the tongues of the Indian crowds" as he left Lahore for Jammu, in the north. He looked out over the plains into Afghanistan and then he turned back to Karachi. Here he boarded his ship and steamed towards Ceylon.

There was no longer any fear of insurgents; no longer any doubt as to the success of his progress. Ceylon was, as ever, a gracious host, and the island smiled from the moment he arrived. He went on, to Malaya and then to Japan, where the people forgot their prejudice against cheering and hailed him as he passed as if they were a London crowd.

In June the Prince returned to England. The respite was brief. He set out once more, on a journey of thirty thousand miles, to South Africa and South America. Every country which he visited presented a new problem for him. In Australia he had been obliged to understand and to convince Socialist politicians. In India he had been asked to combat the influence of Gandhi. In South Africa he was to face the old resentment of the Boers. The English South Africans and the natives were certain to greet him without any doubts, but the memory of the war dies slow among the Dutch South Africans, and the Prince came upon an entirely different ordeal the moment he stepped ashore at Cape Town. Oudtshoorn, in the Cape Province, soon showed him which way the affections of the Dutchmen lay. The white train drew into a railway station which is about two miles from the town. There a commando of Dutch farmers was waiting for him. Happily, they had brought a spare stallion, and, with the genius which seldom deserted him, the Prince rejected the car which was waiting for him and said that he would ride into Oudtshoorn with the commando.



106 Arriving at Buenos Aires, 1924



107 The Return from America, 1924



108 Leading a Commando, South Africa, 1925



109 On the Zambesi, 1925

He led them, at the gallop. Again, at Stellenbosch, where the University students have often indulged in theories about emancipation in government, he had a victory. It was a Dutch student who paid him perhaps the finest tribute he ever received: "We cheered because we know a man when we see one," he said. "Our presence here is intended as a tribute to your manliness, which the most persistent attempts of the whole world have not been able to spoil."

As the white train sped on, the Prince dug deeper and deeper into the life of the new country. Sometimes the train stopped for him to shoot springbok or guinea-fowl, and once he stepped down to join a group of Kaffir minstrels, with his ukelele. The cities of South Africa are vastly different in character, but they gave the Prince the same lusty welcome wherever he went. At Port Elizabeth, hordes of natives walked over the hills to greet him and they addressed him as—

The Beloved of the young children;
He who can be stern as the mountain
Yet dances as the young wind.

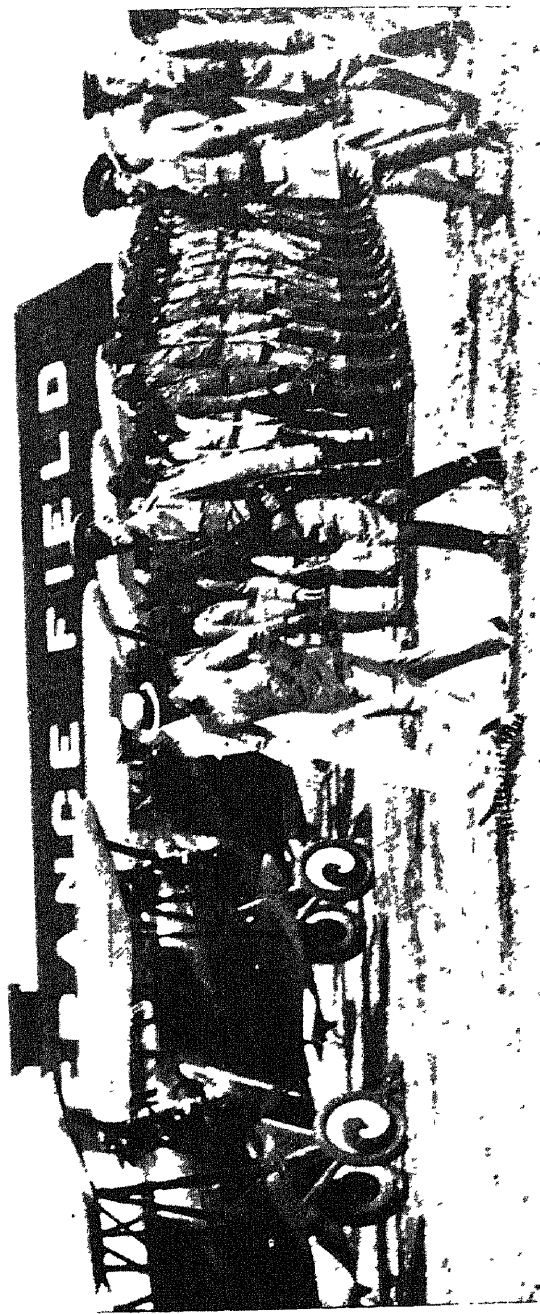
One remarkable theme comes out of this journey. The Prince had been heralded and acclaimed so much by this time that it was a matter of wonder that he kept his balance and keen judgment. Compliments did not cloud the inner purpose of his tours, and one speech which he made to the ten thousand Bantus who danced before him shows that he did not throw his opportunities away. "I would caution you," he said, "against tendencies to mistrust those in authority, or to turn to those whose smooth-tongued promises have yet to be translated into performance. To fight these dangers, you should learn to manage your own affairs."

From the coast, the royal train turned inland, towards the Transvaal. One might go on, catching fresh pictures from the story, but South Africa repeated what we have already heard from Australia and New Zealand. It is

enough to take two tributes to close the story of his South African visit. When Mr. Hofmeyer spoke to him, on behalf of the Dutch people, he said: "You have shown that you understand us; you have spoken to our people in their own tongue, thus giving recognition to their language. In doing so you have touched a chord in our hearts which will continue to vibrate. We recognise in you, Sir, if I may say so, a certain kinship of character with our own people. Ours is a simple people, big-hearted and frank. . . . In you, Sir, we recognise that the keynote of character is sincerity."

The second tribute came from the Zulu Chiefs, addressing him on behalf of the Zulu people. "We thought that we were conquered, that we were crushed and finished, but we have lived to learn that it is not the British way. Having experienced the mildness of British rule, we rejoice the more because it subdued us."

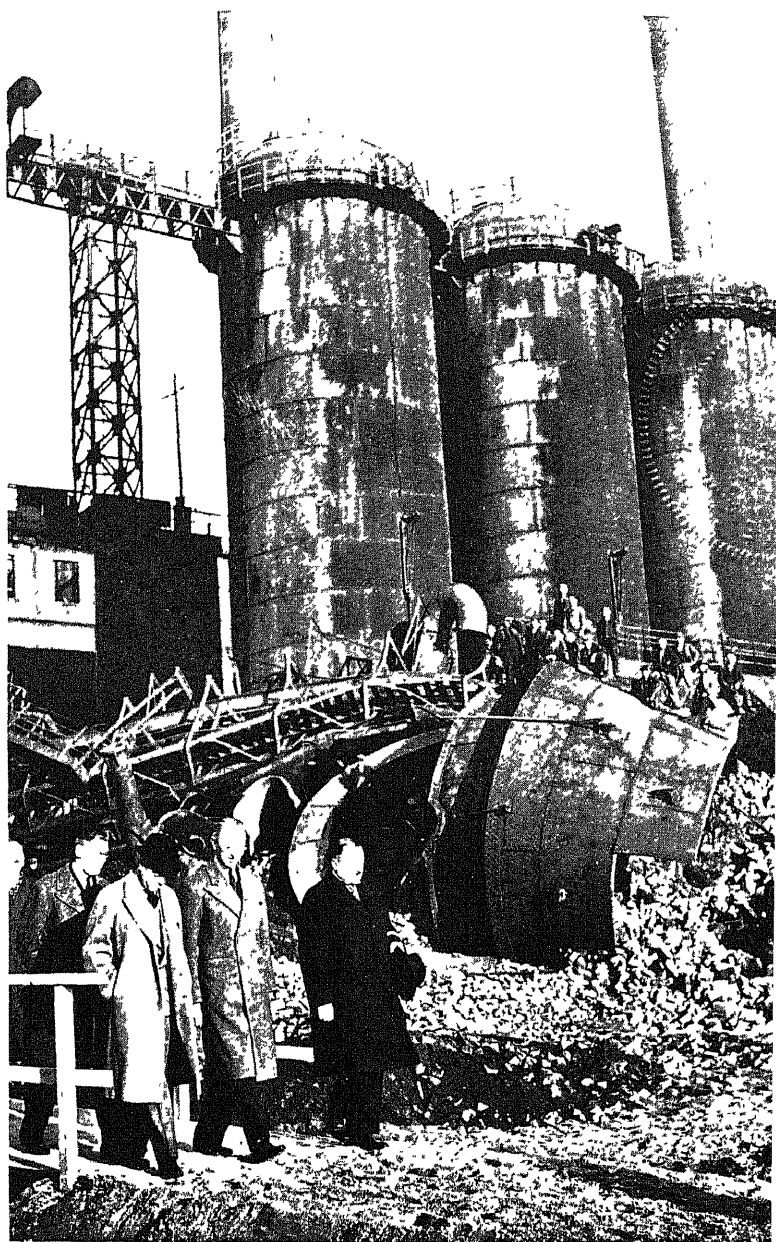
Before the Prince of Wales returned to England he crossed the Atlantic, pausing at St. Helena, and arriving in Montevideo on August 14th. This journey to South America took him into a new kind of world. He no longer travelled under the Union Jack to remind British people of their ancestry, nor to impress the qualities of British rule upon vanquished races. He became a plenipotentiary among foreigners, and the success which came to him in the Argentine and then in Chile was unique among his exploits. Montevideo cheered itself hoarse, and the royal guest went on to Buenos Aires. The cry was "Vive el Principe de Gales!" and the spirit of welcome was strangely different from the serious friendliness of the Dutchmen in Africa. Here was more of the air of a carnival; fashion and music and wine contributed to the scene. The horses which drew his carriage were harnessed in gold, and the rain which fell on him was of roses and daffodils. Again he paid the country the compliment of having learned a new language *en route*. He had spoken to the Rajputs in Hindustani and to the Dutchmen in Afrikaans. Now he answered



110 In the United States, 1931



111 With the Motherwell Unemployed



112 Inspecting Derelict Steelworks in South Wales



113 Landing from his Aircraft



114 At a City Dinner

his hosts in competent Spanish. Mr. Ralph Deakin described the welcome in Buenos Aires: "It was not the mere welcome of a single city; it was an extraordinary tribute that came spontaneously from the citizens and seamen of half a hundred different lands, including Germans, who were here in full force. It is doubtful, indeed, whether anybody has ever listened to such a volume of sound as they combined to make. It was a nerve-racking experience; one wanted to escape, yet wanted to stay and witness the almost barbaric effect of it all."

One tries to break past the carnival and the records of joy to see how the object of all this acclamation was progressing; how he reacted to the increasing enthusiasm. A pleasant story emerges from the records of the Prince's stay in Buenos Aires to help us. A young Argentine Britisher was chosen from the members of *Toc H.* to present a rawhide whip to the Prince. The boy was named Sammy. He was very young, and he was well tutored in his speech for many days beforehand. When the day came, the words were parched on Sammy's tongue. And when he entered the hall and saw the expanse he must cover before he reached the Prince, his feet clung to the floor and would not move. The Prince stepped down from the dais; he walked down the long expanse of floor and led Sammy back. "I can quite understand," he whispered. "It is exactly how I used to feel when I had to make a speech."

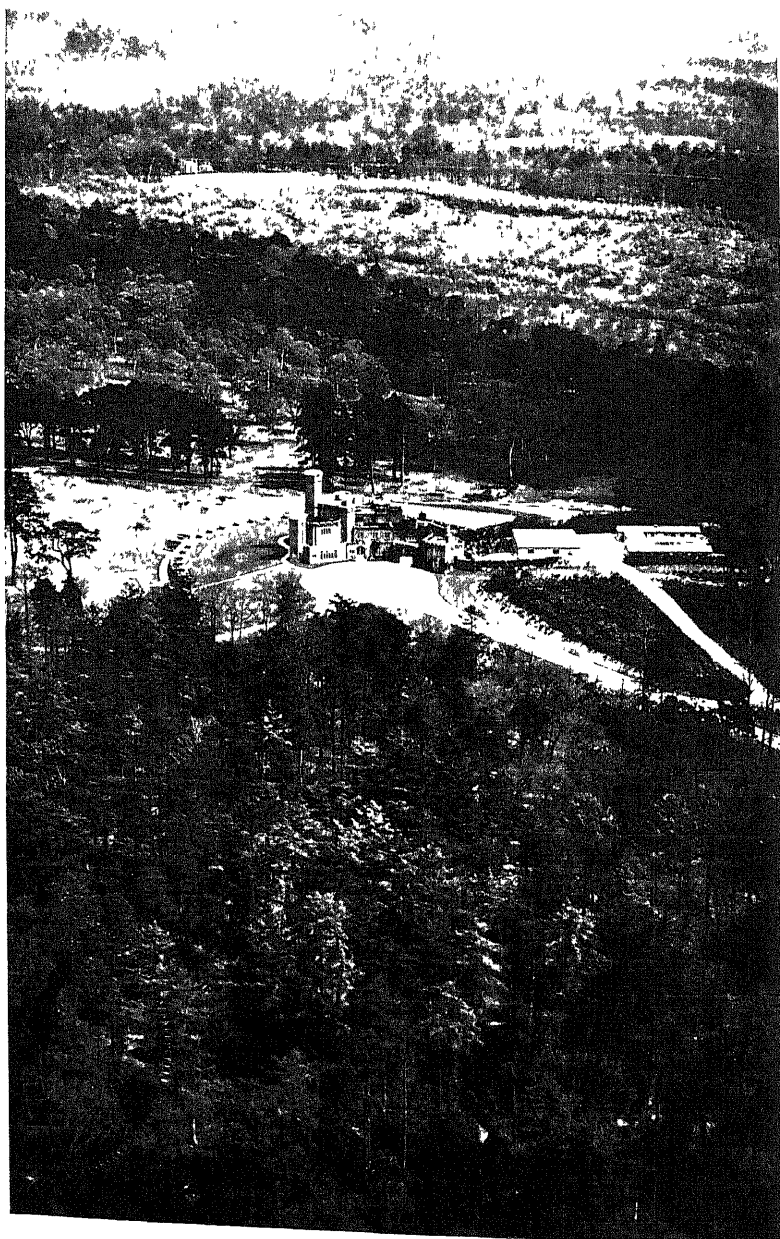
Early in September the royal party crossed the Andes. Now came the conquest of the West. Again and again one has to resist the temptation to write in wonder at the Prince's energy. The tribute might become empty through repetition. But one cannot pass the story of this journey over the Andes without amazement. He was tired. The Argentine had been exacting with its programme, and the Prince might have been excused if he had rested and turned his back upon duty for a day or two. But he sat up, hour after hour, learning still more

Spanish, so that when he came to Santiago he was able to speak to the people in their own tongue, as he laid the foundation-stone of the Canning memorial, outside the British Legation. By September 12th he had come to the sea again and the Pacific was spread before him. Perhaps one dotes too much on the picturesque in recording these restless and beautiful days of travel. The Prince did not always view them so. The practical theme continued, and just as we recall him in the Argentine, busily talking to the commercial leaders of ways of increasing trade with Britain, so we see him in Valparaiso, helping the plan to attach British officers to the Chilean Navy, "to advise on matters of organisation, training, gunnery, submarines and aviation." He kept these important affairs always before him. Long after the cheering was dead, and when the excited South American people had turned to their average life again, the results of the Prince's interest were felt. It was in trade and in understanding that the chief profit came from his visit. There was no hint of him merely resting on his laurels.

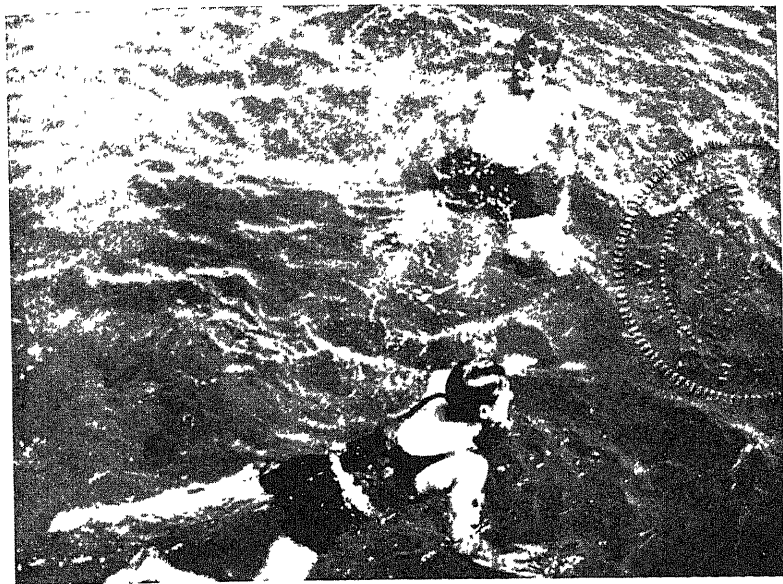
1923-1936

The Prince's wandering ended with South America, at least for a year or two. He returned to England, to enjoy the home life from which he had been estranged for so long. At last the time came for him to use his experience and his strengthened character in building up his own life, in relation to his inheritance and his duty to his father's people. One is dealing with events which are still lively in the memories of the millions of people who have been for a brief moment the subjects of a once energetic, sympathetic, and anxious leader. There is no perspective to help us to assess his achievements; no distance in time to help us to see him with an historical eye. But the main themes of King Edward VIII's life are clear to us and, as far as one may describe them

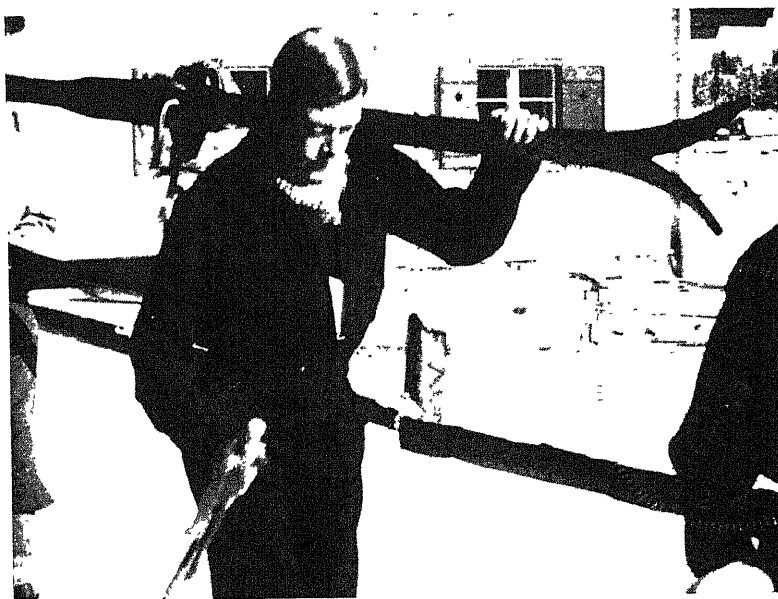




116 Fort Belvedere from the Air



117 Swimming with the Duke of Kent



118 Ski-ing in Austria



119 King Edward VIII's first and last Opening of Parliament

without an intrusion, there is no need to be confused; no need to wonder what type of man it is who has abandoned his Crown. Whatever we may feel in this distressed time, we have no doubt of King Edward's courage. On his return, he settled into English life, but he did not forget the new countries. One has only to look at the list of visitors to York House on any day to realise the diversity of the Prince's interests. In one morning we find General Hertzog, the Maharaja of Burdwan, and Mr. Coates, of New Zealand being received by him. On another day he gave audiences to Mr. Gordon Selfridge, Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mr. Henry Ford, and Sir William Orpen. He seemed to turn from the old order, and the men who interested him most were those who worked. People who pursued leisure or who depended upon their traditions seemed to bore him. He spent more and more time with those who needed him most.

In 1923 the Prince suffered his first glimpse of the distress in the provinces, when he went to a soup kitchen and saw a man without a shirt beneath his coat. The one passing incident seemed to crystallise his purpose. He came back to London with the cry that sympathy was "not enough." "What can I do? What can be done?" he said to the first man with whom he was alone.

The way of his sympathies was now set, and from this time neither pleasure nor more lordly duties came between him and the problem of the distressed areas. He slowly earned the tribute which was paid to him by the Labour leader, Mr. Thomas Cook, when he said to the Prince: "You, Sir, have done a marvellous thing." This was when the Prince made his astonishing journey among the poor of the North, almost alone. There were no receptions, no dinners, and no pandering to the vanity of county magnates. He went North with his secretary and Sir Noel Curtis-Bennett and he even refused police protection, much to the embarrassment of the authorities. The Prince stayed in a small station hotel, and from there he planned his mission. The scenes which followed

cannot be described without drawing too much upon the Prince's own emotions, which are his own, despite the limelight in which he was forced to live. He walked from house to house, through the mud. The ill and the dying, the poor and unhappy, saw in him a sane, helpful messenger. He soothed them by his presence, going into their houses, asking for their pay-sheets, and enquiring into their circumstances. But the theme was as practical as it was compassionate, and when he boarded his train to return to London, after four days of enquiry, he typed a long letter to the Prime Minister. We do not know what was in the letter, but we do know that the conscience of the country was stirred, and that from this time there began a real and constructive campaign to remove the shadows from the lives of those unfortunate people who suffered most under the economic depression of the time.

People who went to the Prince of Wales with a cause or an argument were sometimes abashed by the way in which he set humbug aside. He was seldom hoodwinked by time-serving or vanity and he did not hesitate to be abrupt with hypocrites. From this sincerity an important power arose. He came to be an influence in affairs, rather than a romantic figure. In his speeches he seldom drew upon the picturesque, and his audiences were often surprised when he replied to some florid compliment by saying, "Commercial education is essential in a commercial nation," and then, "Commerce is no longer a haphazard affair, but calls for a cultured intellect and a great power of mental concentration." Of the cinema he said: "Films are a real aid to the development of Imperial Trade," and he talked to journalists of the "science and art" of advertising, and he appreciated the fact that they were his "publicity agents." These calm and sensible phrases suggested that we were to receive a new kind of leadership from the Prince of Wales. They hinted also that when he came to the Throne he would take a practical view of the Empire's problems, and not

blind himself with too many ideals nor hide his meaning in rhetoric.

Perhaps it is true that the real history of the world lies in the record of the growth of human nature and character rather than in the story of nations that rise and fall. Perhaps the development of mankind towards nobleness is the theme that stretches through the succession of scenes, surviving empires and triumphing over pain and frustration. The space is too big for our comprehension; nor are philosophers and historians able to help us, with all their wit and fancy, to know why we are upon this earth and where our efforts will lead us. But the problem of our own little space of existence is more clear to us. We see ourselves taking our place in the continuity of life upon this island or in the Dominions, all of which make a great empire. We know that we are rich and comparatively safe. But we know also that we have a grave responsibility to the rest of the world. British people have been very fortunate during the past three hundred years. They began by building up a vast empire, astutely, while the rest of Europe was fighting over Silesia, Lorraine, Bohemia, and Bavaria. We saw our opportunity and we exploited it. We have been fortunate ever since, and in no way more than in our rulers. We have been blessed by a succession of monarchs, for a century, all of whom served us well. We have prospered also upon the fact that, being islanders, we have not been troubled by the frontier jealousies which poison life in the rest of Europe. The faults which have arisen from this history of good luck are pride and lethargy, with, perhaps, a dangerous devotion to our past.

We hoped that the young King would be our leader in fighting against these faults, but he has chosen otherwise and the Empire which he might have ruled is now learning to reconcile his failure as a king with the long story of his success as Prince of Wales.



120 King Edward VIII in London, April, 1936



121 King George V and King George VI, 1923

PART V
KING GEORGE V AND
GEORGE VI

1895-1914

IN December of 1895, when the present King was born at White Lodge, his great-grandmother still ruled her Empire from Windsor Castle. She was nearing the end of her great reign. At an age when most widows would have taken to their sofas she still held the reins of power in her strong old hands. Only a little time before she had summoned Lord Rosebery to be her Prime Minister, without seeking the advice of friend or Minister. One passage in her Journal gives us a picture of the venerable Queen, fighting against her failing senses, in the year of the present King's birth. She wrote, a little more than two weeks after he was born: "Beatrice read me telegrams after tea, as my sight is bad, and I have not yet succeeded in getting spectacles to suit." And afterwards: "So much to do, and my troublesome eyes make everything much more difficult."

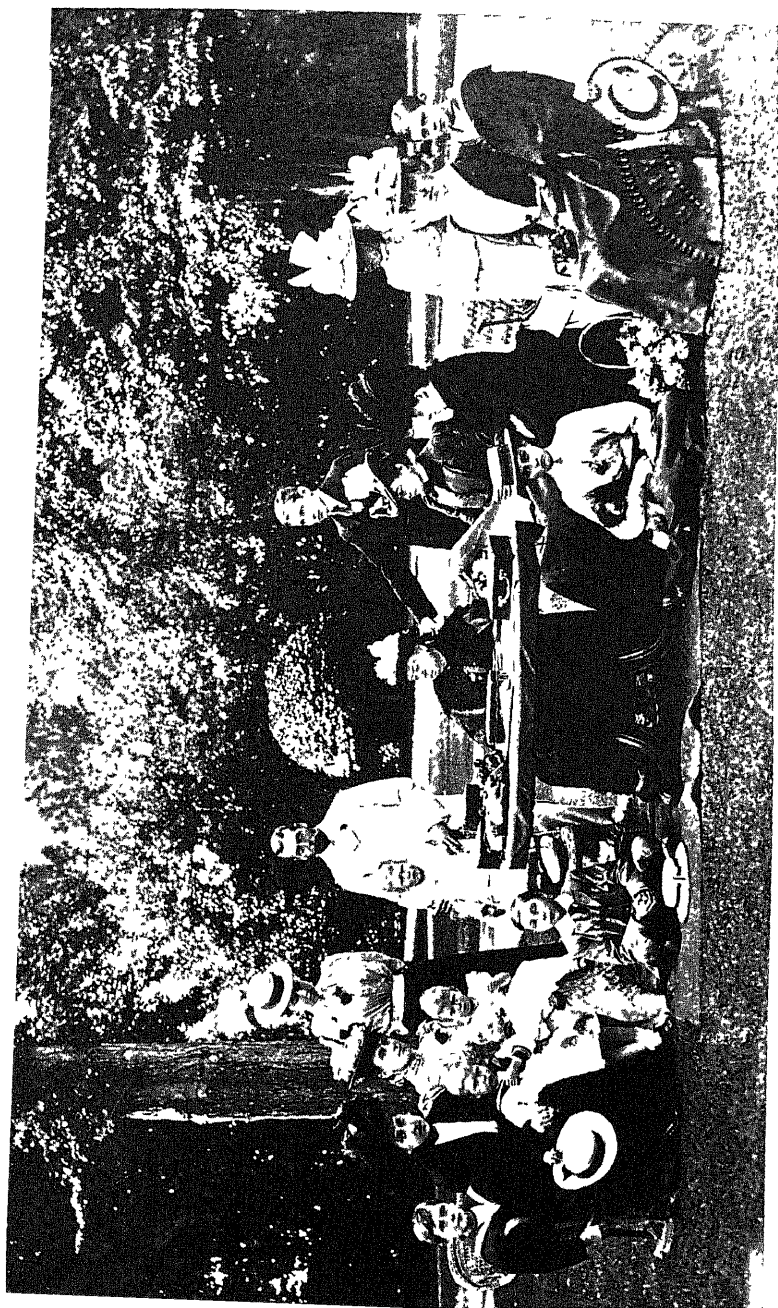
She drove over to White Lodge soon after the baby was born, and there she enjoyed a sight which must have stirred her fading imagination. Within her experience she could recall three Kings who had ruled before her, for her memory went back to George the Third. Before her now, she could contemplate four Princes who would rule after her. In the room were her son, afterwards King Edward VII; her grandson, afterwards King George V; her great-grandson, who was for a brief season Edward VIII; and his younger brother, who is now our Sovereign, ruling under his father's name.

Discipline and simplicity were the order at White Lodge. The children grew up with little of the splendour and limelight which was waiting for them in the future.

When King Edward VII came to the Throne, in 1901, the life of the Princes opened out and they lived partly at York House, in St. James's Palace, and partly at Frogmore, the secluded Georgian house in Windsor Home Park.

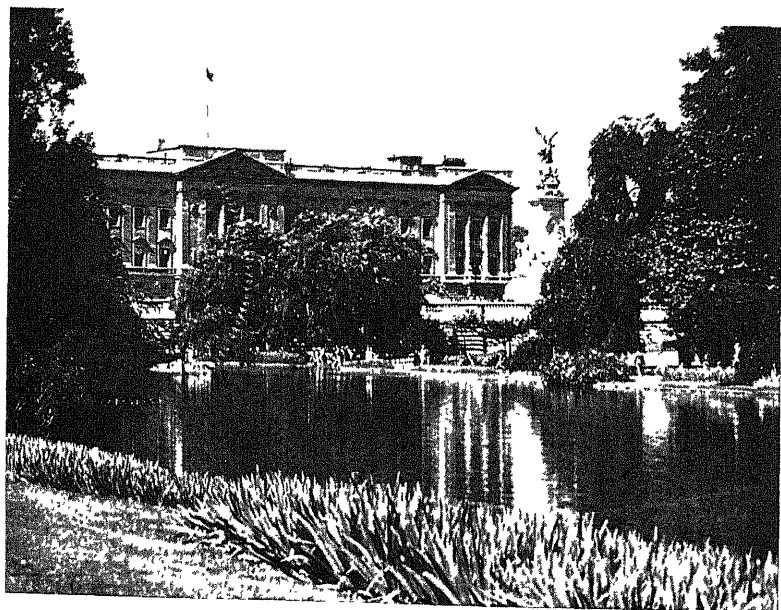
The influences which moulded the young Princes were diverse. Prince Albert was naturally disciplined and obedient. The virtues which the Prince Consort brought with him from Coburg were strong in King George V, and they were strong in his second son. He was not a brilliant scholar, but he learned diligently and the surroundings of his childhood at White Lodge were designed to make him industrious. But King Edward VII kept up a different kind of Court, within Windsor Castle and at Buckingham Palace. There the young Princes were let loose whenever they went to stay with him. They were encouraged in their pranks by the King, who was not above joining in their practical jokes and games. Mr. Taylor Darbyshire tells us in his book on the present King that the fun was sometimes so uproarious that their mother, "anxious for the behaviour of her children, felt that perhaps a check should now and again be placed on their high spirits." So a tutor was appointed "to accompany them on their visits" to their grandfather. It seemed, for some time, that the late King George might be too strict as a father. He viewed his responsibilities much as the Prince Consort had worried over his son.

When Prince Albert the younger was old enough, he was sent to the Naval College at Osborne. He began at the first stage of the fine machinery of naval education. The difference between Prince Albert and his older brother, Prince Edward, soon manifested itself. Subsequent events have shown us the similarity between George IV, King Edward VII, and King Edward VIII. They all upheld the Hanoverian tradition. But the present King went on in his father's footsteps. He also became an efficient sailor, and from the beginning, he





123 White Lodge, Richmond Park



124 Buckingham Palace from St. James's Park

was able to handle a boat with more success than his brother. He studied seamanship conscientiously, and it is interesting, in casting the story forward, to remember that he is the only Sovereign of his House who has been under fire in a sea battle: the only King to have taken active part in a war since George II fought at Dettingen. King George VI served in *Collingwood*, at Jutland.

From Osborne, Prince Albert went to Dartmouth. When this part of his education ended, a new phase began. Up to this time, Prince Edward and his younger brother had been brought up together. But the way of the eldest son was to be in greater lights, according to their parents' plan. It was certain that he would some day be King. Prince Albert could have a private career, and it was expected that he would continue in the Navy. His father had also been trained as a second son, with the purpose of becoming a professional sailor. Prince Edward went from Dartmouth to *Hindustan*, and after a brief cruise his sea career ended. Not so Prince Albert. He was sent to *Cumberland* as a cadet, and for the first time he set out to see the world.

This first cruise was of tremendous importance. Up to this time, Prince Albert of York had been allowed few experiences of life beyond England. There were less visitors to his grandfather's Court than in the old days, and his education had kept him away from meeting people from the Dominions. *Cumberland* took him to the islands of the West Indian station. These were all picturesque experiences for him. They gave him his first sense of land travel and seafaring. But the visits which put the real test upon him were in Canada and Newfoundland. There he became an ambassador. His shyness often gave people a wrong impression of his qualities. He seemed quiet and he had few spectacular gifts. But a good, dry humour was welling up within him as he came to know more of the world. There were many sly quips to show that his judgment was keen.

There were two sides to his experiences in Newfoundland and Canada. On board *Collingwood*, he worked like a beaver. He was naturally energetic, in mind and body. To these merits were added frankness and a complete lack of class-consciousness; the serene lack of class-consciousness which is the blessing of peasants and princes. He simply could not make people feel uncomfortable or self-conscious. His frankness was sometimes such that people thought he lacked graciousness. It was only that he could not pretend.

Prince Albert travelled as far as Montreal. He did not catch public favour in a flash, as his brother always did. It came slowly to him, but it came securely. Mr. Darbyshire quotes a report written by Captain W. E. C. Tait, who travelled with the Prince in *Collingwood*. Captain Tait wrote:

“He always put his back into whatever he was doing, and I can see him now, rushing through the intense effort of the day and then finishing up with the traditional bread and cheese, onions, and beer before turning in. All his work was done cheerfully and well, but perhaps best of all was the way he handled the picket-boat when he was in charge of her, while he was more than a good hand at the sailing races.”

1914-1918

Two dramas brought the young Princes into the lime-light in the early months of the War. The story of Prince Edward's plea to Kitchener is well known: how he climbed the stairs of the War Office and begged the Secretary of State for War to allow him to go into the trenches. At the same time, Prince Albert was suffering one of the great disappointments of his life as a sailor. In September, he was so ill that he had to be brought on shore, to be operated on. He had never been strong, and both his physique and his nerves held him back from

full enjoyment of all physical effort. While his brother was worrying Kitchener at the War Office, Prince Albert was worrying the Naval Medical Board to allow him to return to his ship. At first he was consoled with half-measures. He was given a post in the Admiralty. But early in the new year he was allowed to return to *Collingwood* and steam to Scapa, to join the Fleet. It must always be remembered, as an insight into the new King's approach to his duty, that he rejoined his ship against every advice. He was still ill, and for some months he worked on, through the melancholy days of waiting for the battle that did not come. In the end he collapsed and was taken on shore once more. He was rewarded for his constancy. He was able to rejoin his ship again, a little time before the Battle of Jutland. In the heavy mist of that ominous afternoon, in May of 1916, Prince Albert played his part in expending eighty-four rounds against the enemy. He was mentioned in despatches for his "coolness and courage," but the trophy which is still a delight to him is the white ensign which his ship flew during Jutland.

Towards the close of the war, a new interest began. In time, Prince Albert of York was to occupy an important honorary position in connection with the Royal Air Force, but when the title came to him, it was not empty of experience. Flying had been in the experimental stages when he was a boy. He had been exactly eight years old when the first heavier-than-air craft had been flown at Dayton. He had watched the progress of flying from the beginning and he was to ascend to the responsibility, in later years, of flying his elder brother. During his training at Osborne his boyish interest in flying had become stronger, and Prince Albert divided his attention between seafaring and the air. But he was never allowed then to fly. His enthusiasm had its first opportunity in February of 1918, when he was attached to the Royal Naval Air Service at Cranwell. He was thus identified with the beginning of Cranwell's fine traditions.

He remained at Cranwell for five months, gaining daily experience of ground work. But the interesting occasion came after he had been there for two months. When the Royal Naval Air Service joined the Royal Flying Corps and became the Royal Air Force, as we know it now, Prince Albert was one of the first naval officers to become an officer of the new, young Service.

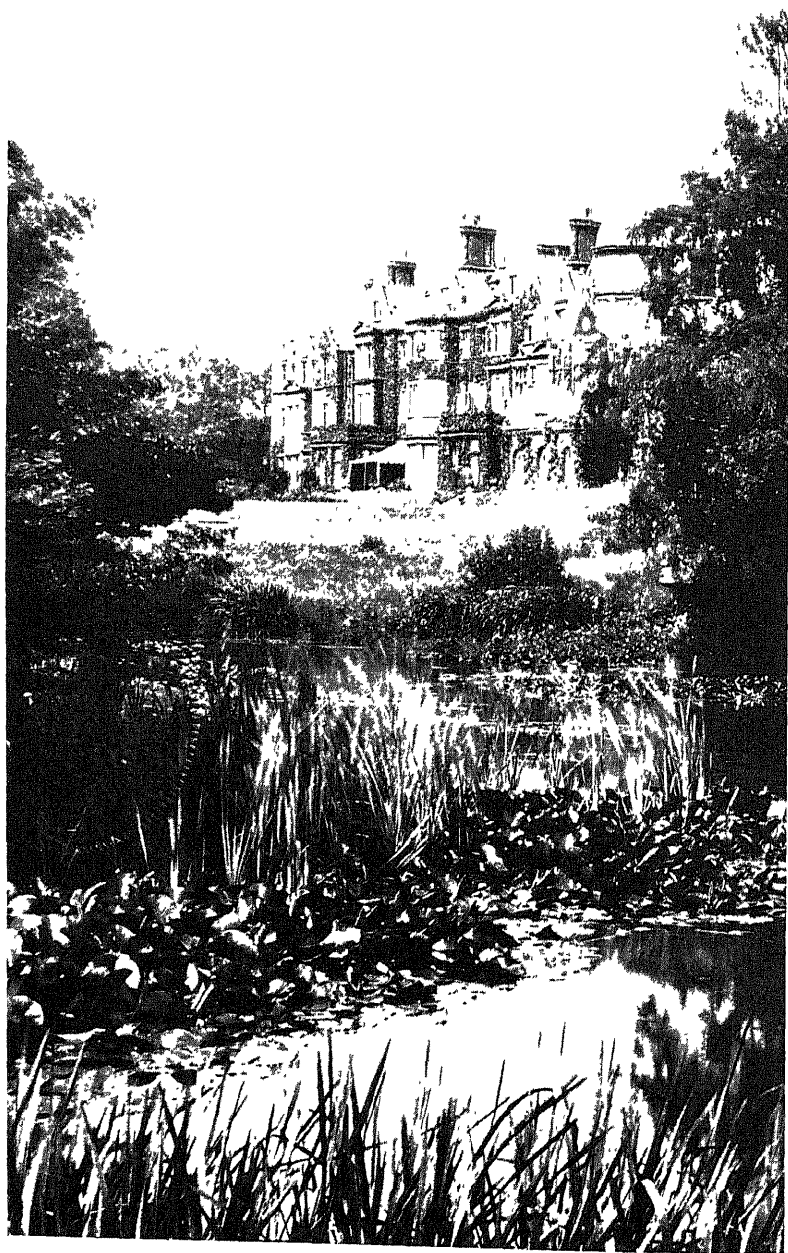
In the last months of the war the present King's service broadened by a term with Lord Trenchard, then Sir Hugh Trenchard, at Nancy. He had also been with the R.A.F. Cadet Brigade at Hastings, so that when peace came he knew many aspects of the Service. All was leading to a unique end. While his brothers clung to the older Services, he threw himself into the experiment and change in which the R.A.F. was being born. He went through the routine of the Air Ministry, and when he was aware of the administrative side of the Royal Air Force, he began his training as a pilot. Prince Albert was not so greatly fascinated by flying as by the actual creation of the Air Force. But he took his pilot's certificate, and with no prearrangement, he once took his brother for a short flight, much to the concern and agitation of the officers who were left on the ground, haunted by the realisation that the heir to the Throne and his brother were in the air together.

1918

When demobilisation came, many young officers were being turned out upon the world, and it was not thought just that Prince Albert should continue with either Service. Instead he became an undergraduate at Cambridge. Seldom had a young man sought the banks of the Cam and the stately air of the colleges so well equipped with experience. Lenient rules were made for Prince Albert when he went to Cambridge after the War, with his brother, Prince Henry. They did not live in college. A house was taken for them, and through a stroke of



125 St. James's Palace



126 Sandringham House from the Lake

good judgment, Sir Louis and Lady Greig were given control of the household.

One important phase of the new King's character comes into view at this point. He has always had a talent for making friends, and the still more blessed talent of being able to keep them. Sir Louis Greig is an exemplary courtier, in that he has none of the professional courtier's affectations or insincerities. He has humour and understanding and an equal capacity for friendship. These qualities made all the difference to the time Prince Albert spent at Trinity. Cambridge soon became used to the sight of two Princes going in and out of the College. Prince Albert usually hurried to his lectures on a motor-bicycle, and he went so far in assuming the mind and habits of a thorough undergraduate that he was once fined for smoking in the street; a crime to an undergraduate, if he is wearing the cap and gown of his college.

The trend of Prince Albert's mind was mainly practical. But as his judgment matured he became more and more interested in history. This new interest came to him in the most fortunate way. His tutors failed to guide him into the ways of bookish learning when he was a boy, but there came the time when his own instincts awakened and guided him there, through pleasure and not merely through duty. The fruit of this historical taste came in later years, when he went to live in his house in Windsor Park. He fossicked about among old papers and discovered many forgotten facts about the lesser houses in the Windsor Park and showed himself to be a competent archivist as well as a mere reader of history.

The great result of his belated education at a university was that Prince Albert evolved his own tastes, built up his own library, and chose his own channels of interest. The principles of citizenship held his attention and he studied most aspects of civic life, so that when the time came he did not move among the mass of his father's subjects as a stranger. This fund of knowledge is of ever

greater strength and importance now. The modest, quiet, well-informed and contented family man who lives behind the façade of Buckingham Palace is not, as he said, "palace minded." He knows the thoughts of simpler people and their problems are apparent to his mind as well as sure of his sympathy.

Early in his life, it was seen that the Duke of York was growing up as heir to his father's character. He had greater knowledge of the lives of ordinary people because he was brought up in days of increasing social freedom. But one of the great qualities of King George's character was that he was able to adapt himself to the radical changes in thought and government, when the time came. It may have seemed strange for historians to recall that King George V was born in the 'sixties and trained in his grandmother's way of thinking . . . but that he was capable of accepting a Socialist Government in 1924. Acceptance is a little word for the spirit in which he received them. They seemed to bring refreshment into his life, with their unconventional and sincere theories of emancipation.

When the first Radical Members entered Parliament, during Queen Victoria's reign, she was still politically powerful enough to rule them with an iron rod. When Sir Charles Dilke criticised her financial affairs, she was able to refuse to have him in any office in which she would have to see him or confer with him.

But while the personal influence of Royalty had increased in the past fifty years, the political power had decreased and King George had been obliged to receive many violent reformers among his ministers. The manner in which he essayed this is truly a proof of his greatness. King George had no time for bores, and he hated humbug. When the Socialist Ministers who came to him were sincere men, they found a sovereign who was eager to understand them and willing to believe in their intentions.

The reception of Mr. J. H. Thomas led to what might

be called a friendship. There is a story of their first meeting which is as authentic as any which comes to us at second-hand. Mr. Thomas often has a healthy Elizabethan smack about his vocabulary. Vigorous adjectives sometimes give colour to his talk. He is said to have used one or two when he went to the King as Minister, in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's first ministry.

The King, a little surprised, said, "But, Mr. Thomas, I thought you were coming here to represent a high-minded and rather sanctimonious Government."

"Yes, that is true," answered Mr. Thomas, "but I am the relief."

The King's patience and foresight carried him through the radical changes in a way which, perhaps, Queen Victoria or King Edward would never have achieved. In time, when the letters of to-day are released for historians to pore over, this aspect of his achievement will assume importance.

When the poker-backed Tories sickened at the appointment of Mr. MacDonald as Prime Minister, the King repeated an adage, which he had remembered from his days in *Bacchante*. "In the Navy we have a motto, 'Keep your hair on.' " It was a homely and wise piece of advice in a troublous time. His sanity and his respect for the Constitution urged him to give the Socialist Government every chance. And it can be said that the Socialists, without exception, fell under the spell of his justice, his frank humour, and his hidden, unsentimental kindness.

Some time after the Socialists went out of power, there was a remarkable incident which showed how King George's character had impressed them. Speaking at Nottingham, Sir Stafford Cripps mentioned the "opposition from Buckingham Palace," which the Socialist Government would have to face if it came into power again. Like one man, the Socialists rose in the King's defence.

Lord Snowden, one of the most bitter men in the

country, said that Sir Stafford Cripps had made a fool of himself. Mr. J. H. Thomas deplored his "impudence and ignorance." Mr. Bernard Shaw said that Buckingham Palace was the one place where he would be safe. Lord Allen, former Secretary of the I.L.P., called it "a crazy outburst."

Three days afterwards, Sir Stafford Cripps drank the toast, "The King, God bless him," at a luncheon in London. The King might well have smiled during this wrangle. He might well have recalled his simple advice, "Keep your hair on."

It is not easy for us to realise what this incident means in history: a Monarch defended by a group of Labour agitators, against one of their own blood. It could not have happened in any other country, nor with any other Sovereign.

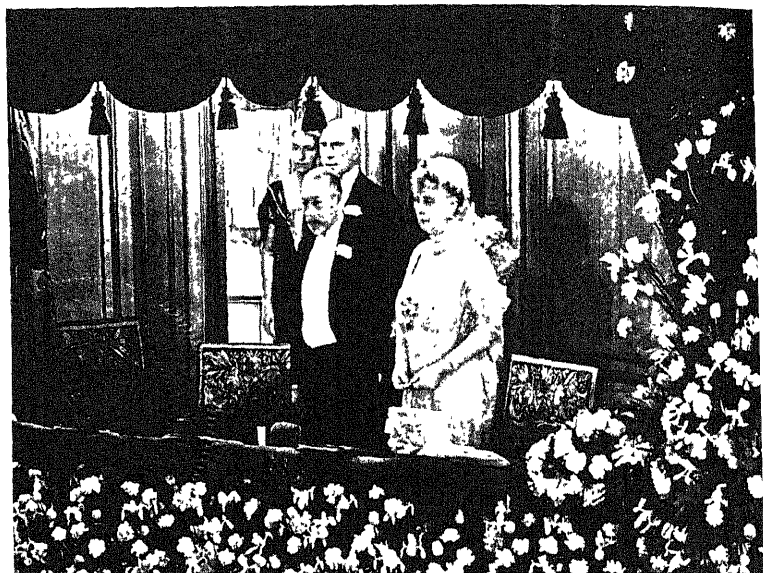
The sanity of these events must have had its influence on the present King. While his brother was travelling about the world, gaining only scattered impressions of English life, when he came home in between, the Duke of York was able to stay near to his father, and gain much from his example.

1918-1923

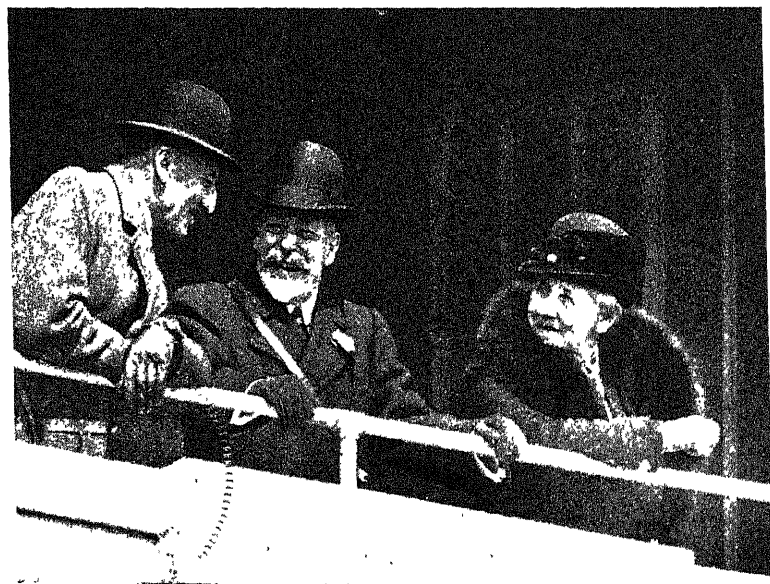
There is no counting the selfish deeds committed in the name of charity. The poor prosper well on the vanity of the rich. One is therefore shy in writing the story of a man's kindness to those who suffer, lest his motives should be misrepresented. The thought comes that one has never been fully aware of the present King's work among the poor. His annual boys' camp is celebrated, but one does not recollect him dispensing charity and moving among the unfortunate. This is an interesting sidelight upon his nature. No man could be less vain and more self-effacing in performing his duty. In this spectacular age, when it is difficult for a public man to smile without the click of cameras in front of him, this modesty in the King calls for explanation. He reveals



127 King George V at the Cenotaph, 1934



128 Command Performance, 1934



129 At Epsom Races, 1933

for us the vital difference between *popularity* and *respect*. When we examine these two words, we realise that popularity is a more or less recent invention. Film stars are popular, and they fade over night. Seaside resorts are popular; new dishes, new fashions and, especially, men who court public favour. But if the public favour is enthusiastic, it is also fickle. Popularity has nothing to do with respect. And it is *quiet* respect which the present King has inspired, from the beginning.

Prince Albert came down from Cambridge well equipped to take his place as a member of his father's busy family. His voice was still hesitating and he was apparently shy. But these were merely superficial characteristics, and within himself he was more self-confident and certain of his star.

Eleven years before, Prince Albert had gone to Osborne as a cadet. In the time between, he had sailed the seas and he had taken part in the Battle of Jutland. He had become an air pilot and he had studied the inner workings of the service. He had done well at the University, and he had earned his father's good opinion. King George set his seal upon his son's achievement in June of 1920, when Prince Albert became Duke of York, the title which his own father had borne when he was a second son.

From these scenes, in which the Duke of York has walked for us, in the public view, we come upon the sacred and private chapter of his life. Many royal marriages have been made through the machinery of Parliament and in the cause of the country. Happily, the Duke of York was second son, and in 1922 there was no threat of the higher and more terrifying fate that was awaiting him. He was able to scorn political aims and remain loyal to his own heart when the time came for him to marry.

When we recall the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of York, we awaken scenes which are still lively to us.

Except for the marriage of Princess Mary, there had been no domestic celebration in the Royal Family for many years, and the mass of people remembered the appearance of their Sovereign and his family only in connection with the War. The public imagination was deeply stirred on the dismal April morning, when the lordly wedding carriages passed towards Westminster Abbey. The War was over and life was assuming its old security. It was fitting that the clouds parted, every now and then, to let a gleam of April sun into the London streets. When their honeymoon was over, the Duke and Duchess went to live at White Lodge, where he had been born. The Duke was now able to appreciate the beauty and associations of the house and gardens more than when he was a boy. It was a suitable setting in which a young couple might plan their life together.

To appreciate Queen Elizabeth, one must first know the setting of her childhood: the red stone castle which rises from the great valley on the eastern coast of Scotland. Its story stretches from the dim legends of Macbeth to our own day. Its lofty turrets hold a hundred fair and horrible stories, and the thick, inviolate walls seemed to be wrapped in centuries. To read of Glamis in a book makes one feel that life is no longer there; that such a load of history could not permit the ordinary offices of everyday living in the twentieth century. But Glamis is as much a home as any house in the British Isles and, during the years after the birth of our Queen, it was as lively and free of historical dust as any other home in the land.

Queen Elizabeth was born in England, and, when she was a child, Glamis was only her summer home. But it was her true background. Every biographer who describes the childhood of illustrious people spends a great deal of ink on certain conventions. The illustrious one was a little naughty, of course; extremely kind to animals; and prone to make precocious, wise remarks. The result is usually a rather sentimental picture. The childhood

of the Queen was not sentimental, but it was wholly beautiful.

Scottish people know (as the English will never know) how to live with servants, gardeners, tenants, and villagers as one great community. A Scottish community is like a great family, and the fact that one member of that family is laird, another dairymaid, another crofter, and another coachman makes no difference to the loyalty which binds them together. This, then, was the atmosphere in which Queen Elizabeth grew up. It is very important that this should be remembered.

Her life has not been eventful, and a description of the Queen must always be a character-sketch rather than a record of incidents. It is her own graciousness, her intelligence, and her quick humour which pervade the few incidents. They were in no way spectacular until the blessed day when she consented to marry the second son of King George, and give to England an example of married life as perfect as that which graced Buckingham Palace from 1910 until the grey January day in 1936 when King George was buried.

The theme of the Queen's life does not change from the day of her birth, in August of 1900, to these days of her sudden elevation to being First Lady in the Land. Little incidents prove the continuity of charm and goodness, from the day when her nurse described her as "an exceptionally happy, easy baby," to the day when Sargent described her as "the only completely unconscious sitter he had ever had": from the days when she played cricket with her brothers on the lawn at Glamis, to the day when she walked into White Lodge as a bride.

The scene of her betrothal has already been recorded, so it is not an intrusion to mention the wood of Lord Strathmore's house at Waldenbury; the wood in which Lady Elizabeth had played as a child, with her beloved brother. It was there that the Duke and Lady Elizabeth walked together one crisp Sunday morning . . . it was January 14th, 1923.

Two days afterwards, we read in our evening newspapers:

"It is with the greatest pleasure that the King and Queen announce the betrothal of their beloved son, the Duke of York, to the Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Strathmore, to which the King has gladly given his consent."

1923-1926

From this time Lady Elizabeth became a celebrity, and the simplicity and retirement of her old life ended. She lived in a world of photographers and newspaper men, and she suffered the first experience of seeing her name in big type, on the posters in the streets. In this came the proof of her good sense and her naturalness. Her old friends said that she "did not change a bit." She brought to the greater scheme of living the same sincerity with which she had called upon the tenants' wives at Glamis; the same charm which made one of the soldiers say of her, after his period of convalescence under her nursing, "She and my 'fiancy' are as like as two peas."

Many people who saw the Duchess of York after her marriage noted her willingness to please and to listen. But this was not all. Her immediate success with people depended upon a deeper quality. Some women have the power of making you feel at your best. It is a sort of demand they make: a demand that your manners should be at their best, that your mind should be more alert and your choice of words more careful. This stimulation does not come to one consciously; it is a little akin to the sensation of well-being one has in facing the sunshine for the first time after a spell of rain. Some writers have commented on the young Queen's tact. But I do not believe that she is so much tactful as deeply interested in human nature. Every new person she meets is, in a sense, a minor adventure.

The Duke and Duchess were soon drawn into a whirl

of affairs. Their position in the hearts of the people came quickly, and it was strengthened in 1926, when Princess Elizabeth was born.

1926-1930

The post-War generation likes to boast of its cynicism and its conquest over old-fashioned emotions. But passing modes of thought do not affect the foundations of human nature, and London soon learned to treat the Duke's town house as a shrine. There was usually a group of people on the pavement in Piccadilly, waiting for a glimpse of Princess Elizabeth. The delight of the days when she could be seen playing at Windsor is not forgotten by the townspeople who live at the foot of the Castle.

Some years ago, on a silver blue afternoon, I walked on the terrace at Windsor. It was Sunday and as King George was in residence, the band was playing and the public were allowed to walk among the flower beds, listening to the music. There was no scene more elegant in England. It was a custom, a concession which permitted the King's subjects to walk near to him and to enjoy his Sunday afternoon peace with him. I joined the slowly moving parade of Windsor society, the warrant holders and their wives, crisp in summer clothes, the keeper of the barge, who had walked up from the river's brink, a master from Eton, and the broader medley of the nameless. They filtered in and out of the arrangement of bronze statues, sweeping beds of geraniums and stone jardinières, with flowers spilling over their rims. All eyes were turned upon the façade of the castle, for another ceremony was expected, in accordance with custom. At a moment when the swaggering march music faltered and left us in comparative silence, there was a movement at one of the windows. We knew then that the ritual was being observed. Queen Mary appeared. There was no cheering, of course, because Windsor people are

very grand and conscious of their royal tradition. They could *never* behave with the *abandon* of a London crowd. So we just turned our eyes, not so much to our Queen as to our Squire's lady. For there is this about Windsor . . . its castle dominates it and graces its daily existence much as a great house might give authority and richness to a country town. After a minute, the Queen turned away, and when she appeared again, she was holding Princess Elizabeth in her arms. There was a flutter of excitement then; a faint hiss of sss's as the word *Princess* swept from one end of the terrace to the other. I remember a tide of little thoughts that passed through my mind, as I saw the child pressing her face against the glass. I thought of Queen Elizabeth, walking by this same window, perhaps hurrying after one of her mornings of riding in the park. I thought of Shakespeare coming here, to write a play for her, and of Chaucer, walking in the garden. I thought of Charles the First bathing in the river as a boy and of Anne sitting in the window over the north terrace when they brought her the news of Blenheim. It seemed amazing then, even when King George was alive, to realise that the little hands that patted the window pane might some day bend themselves about the royal sceptre.

The Duke and Duchess were not allowed much domestic peace, and, as he conquered his nervousness in speech, the Duke was called on more and more for public service. One story which tells us a good deal of his sense of humour and his sanity is of the opening of the second year of Wembley. The vast amplifiers now used everywhere were more or less a novelty then. The Duke rehearsed his speech in the empty stadium, the day before the opening. As he raised his voice, he realised that no sound was coming from the amplifiers. They had not been "made alive." He turned to somebody and said "The damned things aren't working!" and in that moment the electricians turned the current into the amplifiers and his homely words rang around the vast stadium like thunder.

And there is a tale of his annual boys' camp, which must delight us. It must first be remembered that the Duke of York's Camp was his own idea. He wished to bring public school boys and boys from the industrial areas together . . . a perfect scheme, which has done immense good. Every year, he spends a day with the boys and he usually enters into their games. One day they were playing push-ball and it was suggested that he might referee. He answered, "Referee be blowed, I am going to play." During the game, a public school boy was pushing at the ribs of the player in front of him and he yelled, "Go on, push like hell." He was perhaps surprised when he saw the Duke turn his head a little and answer, "But I *am* pushing like hell."

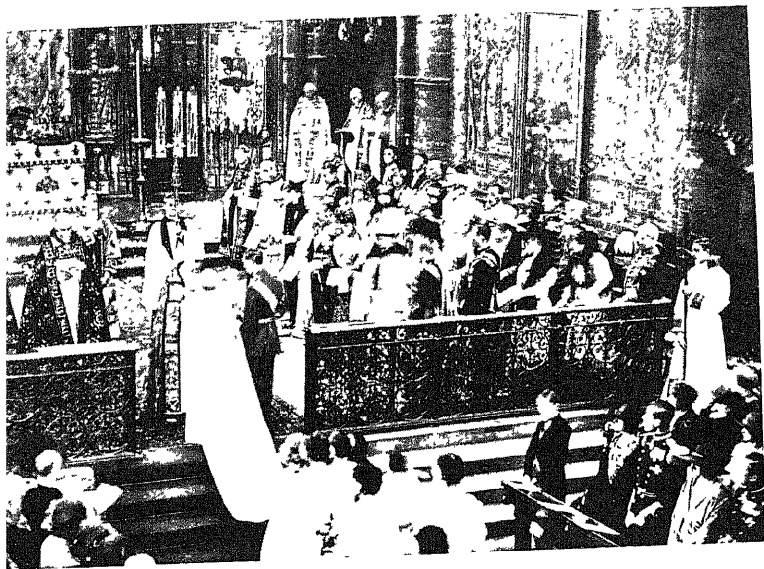
1924-1929

The first long journey made by the Duke and Duchess of York was down the east coast of Africa during the winter of 1924-5. The scenes through which they went were a strange change after their conventional life in England. They went to Mombasa and then inland, to Nairobi, where they conjured up the illusion of an English Christmas. Then to the excitements of their first big-game hunt, from which they returned with rhinoceros and lion. They came home by way of the Nile, a long, interesting journey. The story of this conquest of the Nile country has been told many times. What matters in this record is that one should remember the effect which the Duke made upon the people, white and black, lordly and simple. The light behind his actions was still his lack of class consciousness. Whether his hosts were warriors from Victoria Nyanza or colonial governors, he approached them with the same wide-awake interest. Royal graciousness is an old theme, and it has perhaps been overwritten, but in the case of the present King, the kindness persists so that one cannot help acclaiming it.

There was pleasure and excitement for the royal couple on this journey, but work and strain and anxiety were put upon them when they set out for Australia and New Zealand in 1925. His brother had already been over this vast expanse of sea and land, but the Duke was able to make his own unique conquest. He had this great advantage. When he said: "Take care of the children and the country will take care of itself," he was not theorising. Children were not merely part of a social problem to him. He was already a busy father, and there was experience and affection in the interest which he showed.

One spring morning, the elegant and sunny Waitemata Harbour became a throbbing lake of small boats and sails. Here, at the bottom of the world, where the New Zealand people are so closely tied to the old country that Lord Northcliffe described them as being "more English than the English," the Duke and Duchess won perhaps the great victory of their travels. New Zealand became a little mad with delight: policemen were swept aside and law and order were forgotten. From the first day to the last, they went through exhausting programmes, listened to the addresses of about seventy mayors, laid foundation-stones, planted trees, and inspected veterans. There must be some divine explanation for the fact that they were smiling at the end as at the beginning. Good nature strengthened them. There were days of escape, however, and in the north the Duke was able to enjoy the deep sea fishing which has attracted Zane Grey and other famous rods to the Bay of Islands every year.

But the practical theme must not be forgotten. The Duke's training at Osborne gave him something of the engineer's mind. He was sincerely interested in the butter factories and sheep-shearing plants, the dairy farms and industries. He has inherited his mother's astonishing capacity for gathering facts and remembering them. This talent is barely human, and those who know Queen Mary or the King are usually dumbfounded by their



130 The Wedding of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth,
Westminster Abbey, 1922



131 King George and Queen Mary, with Queen Alexandra and
her Sister, the Empress Marie of Russia, 1923



132, 133 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth

memories. It meant that the Duke returned to England from New Zealand and Australia as well aware of their life as any permanent official in Whitehall.

Australia repeated New Zealand's welcome. The Duke and Duchess travelled over the vast continent, with occasional escapes to hunt kangaroo. But the theme in Australia seemed to be more serious. The celebration of Anzac Day gave the Duke a sacred conviction. For those in England who do not know the world beyond the white cliffs of Dover, the emotions of people in the new countries must remain a mystery. The fierce devotion which Australians show upon such an occasion might surprise the placid Londoner who takes his national anniversaries as a matter of course. The Duke caught, in that one hour, all the spirit of the great, brave, frank Australian people. He talked of this many times, and the sudden realisation seemed to have a great effect on him and to colour all the rest of his tour with new seriousness.

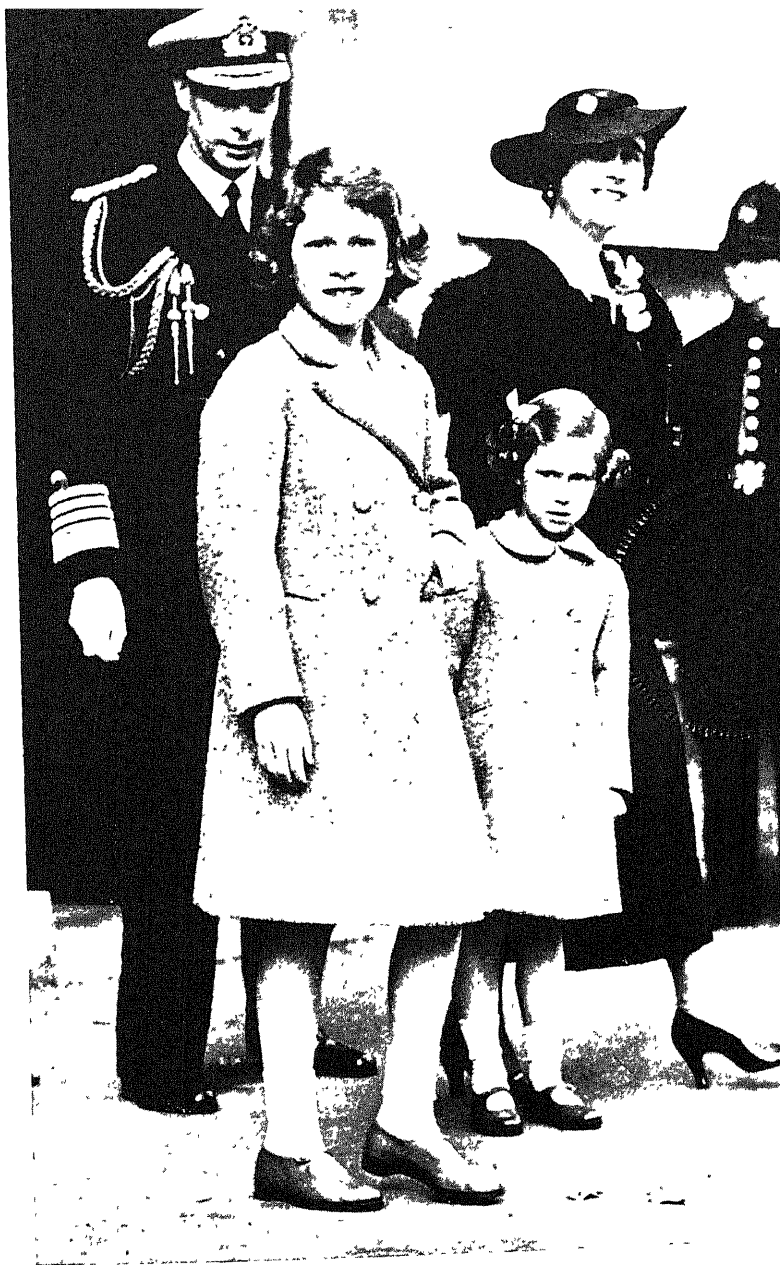
It is not easy to recapture the excitement of other people's travels, even when they are made in royal splendour, and a list of countries and ceremonies does not help us to comprehend the King any better. It was when he returned to England that people realised the chief lines along which his character and interests were to develop. Writers have been over-insistent about his seriousness. Because his sense of fun is not boisterous, they have sometimes missed the keen and penetrating side of his judgments and comments.

On the eve of his departure for Australia, the Duke of York had a spontaneous and affectionate proof of the place he now held as his father's son. It is well known that our present King began his life with an almost hopeless stammer which defeated many experts and attempts at treatment. With the help of Mr. Logue, the Australian who has made a special study of defective speech, the Duke had almost conquered his disability. But it was not all Mr. Logue's science. The Duke had spent hours and hours, day after day, mastering exercises and forcing

his voice into control. Only his desire to be at his best and to do his work well could have sustained him through this ordeal—for it was an ordeal. When he rose to speak at the Pilgrims' dinner, before sailing for New Zealand, he spoke clearly and naturally for the first time. The delight of his audience was astonishing. There was a paternal joyousness in their applause; a realisation that somebody of whom they were fond had mastered a problem through the strength of his own determination.

One of the most important duties performed by the Duke and Duchess when they returned to England was at Holyrood, where they were "Lord High Commissioner" and "Her Grace" during the Assembly of 1929. Holyrood is the heart and spirit of Edinburgh, and because of its Stuart associations it is also a shrine to the Scottish people. Ever since her marriage, the Duchess had been drawn more and more into the life of England. But she is a Scotswoman, and the fierce, good blood of Scotland is in her veins. Holyrood appealed to her imagination, and it is said that she loved this experience more than almost any of her life. To walk in the stately rooms of the Palace is an awe-inspiring and beautiful experience for the merest tourist who buys his ticket at the door. To rule from Holyrood, for ten days, was a majestic experience.

Here is a setting for royal dignity which is wholly satisfying. Holyrood escaped the gorgeousness of George the Fourth and it eluded the æsthetic hanky-panky of the Victorians. Alone among the palaces, it retains the atmosphere of Stuart beauty. There has been no melting and selling fads of fashion to spoil the dream and, almost entirely through the imagination and diligence of Queen Mary, the venerable Scottish palace has been made beautiful and comfortable. During the brief season every year, when Holyrood is opened, one is tricked out of one's time. One is in the company of ghosts from the times of Charles the Second and Queen Anne.



134 The Royal Family, 1937



135 King George V and Queen Mary at Balmoral, 1935

1935-1937

It is not easy to view the excitements of our own time in the light of history; not easy to know what stature the events of our lives will assume in the hands of historians and biographers who come after us. We know that the abdication of King Edward VIII will be the inspiration of many a book and play in the future, when the story of his failure is searched for, in documents and legend. The story of his broken promises and his exile will grow into the shape of a great tragedy as the years pass. We feel the pain and humiliation too keenly now to appreciate this view. But, through the balance of events, we have been able to heal the wound to our national pride with the memory of the closing years of the life of King George the Fifth. We have been able to recapture the sounds and sights of those days when, as patriarch and king and as father of the State, he drove through the streets of London. Living through the months before the celebration of the Jubilee was a strange sensation. Had the plan to acclaim his goodness come from high places, one might not have felt so deeply . . . but as it was, the thanksgiving began in the villages, in the far-away colonial towns and in the crowded little houses of the East End of London. Cynics and people who strut in fine independence were amazed. In an age when monarchy was being destroyed; when the palaces of Europe were empty and thrones were bereft of their kings, a quiet, unobtrusive man who had ruled his empire for twenty-five years suddenly stirred the heart of the world. It was not for any lordly act in his life, nor for any intellectual gifts above the average; not for any romantic posturing or courage in battle that he was given this glory. It was because, in the simplest words, he was a good man who had kept his covenant.

From the time of the Jubilee to the end of his reign, King George enjoyed a degree of affection which was perhaps unique in the history of Kings. For a year, a

sense of well-being and gratitude seemed to pervade the Empire and the focus for this was the throne. The events surrounding King George's death are too near for us to see them calmly. It seemed that the heart of the empire stopped beating on that cold January morning, when his life drew to its close at Sandringham. One read of the new king flying to London, as a portent that changes were to come with his reign. One read of the coffin being carried down the rhododendron walk which King George had known so well, and then being brought to London. During the days that followed, thousands of silent, awed people walked past the bier, in Westminster Hall, where the four magnificent soldiers guarded their dead monarch, the light of the great candles playing upon their motionless hands and faces. It was a time of great sorrow and this sorrow touched countries beyond the Empire. America and France wrote of him as *the* King, and even in Germany there was public grief and sympathy. The Congress of America closed in his honour.

Another emotion mixed with grief among those who watched the funeral procession of the King making its slow way to Paddington and then to Windsor. Behind the coffin walked his two sons, both of whom were to accept their father's crown within a year. The sad, grey face of Edward VIII haunted those who saw him, long after the melancholy of the funeral had passed.

Windsor has opened its gates to many Kings. They have gone there in triumph, in anger and in sorrow. Rulers of other countries have gone there, some as prisoners and some as exiles. James the First was a prisoner in one of the towers. Every King since the Conqueror has walked up the Windsor hill. None of them went to Windsor, in glory or in death, as King George went, for his burial. He was the first sovereign who truly held the love of the world in his hands. It was as if five hundred years were spanned. When Edward the Third created the Order of the Garter, he called the first knights together to cherish the nation's virtue through chivalry

and prayer. King George joined the monarchs of the countries, with this prayer fulfilled.

Only those who live in palaces know how uncomfortable and depressing they can be. In the great, splendid spaces, it is not always easy to keep up the intimate and warm notions of homely comfort. One recalls Fanny Burney's depression at Windsor, because there was not a rug beside her bed, and it must be remembered that even when Kennington had its workmen's flats, with baths, there was not one bathroom in Windsor Castle. These horrors have fortunately been corrected in recent years, but it would be wrong to misunderstand or exaggerate the advantages which will come to the King and Queen in leaving their house in Piccadilly for Buckingham Palace, and their house in Windsor Park for the vast Castle. This must be one of the keenest disappointments in the sudden change which has come to their lives. Making their homes, in London and in the Windsor Park, was one of the chief delights of their early married life together. They were able to carry on the scheme of living to which they were both accustomed. Even Glamis Castle, with its lofty turrets, rising in the Valley of Strathmore, is essentially a home, for all its traditions and grandeur.

Neither the King nor the Queen has been brought up to be "palace minded," and London has lost one of its most charming domestic scenes now that the Princesses no longer play in the small garden behind their parents' house in Piccadilly. It has been a happy experience for many people, passing along the lower edge of the walk between Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner, to be able to peep in through a chink between the trees and watch, as the years passed, the Princesses graduating from perambulator to tricycle. Princess Elizabeth has been forced to leave her enchanted land now, for the fierce light of inheritance burns upon her. She is already torn away from her garden and her tricycle and her toys, to sense the frightening prospect. There have been signs which

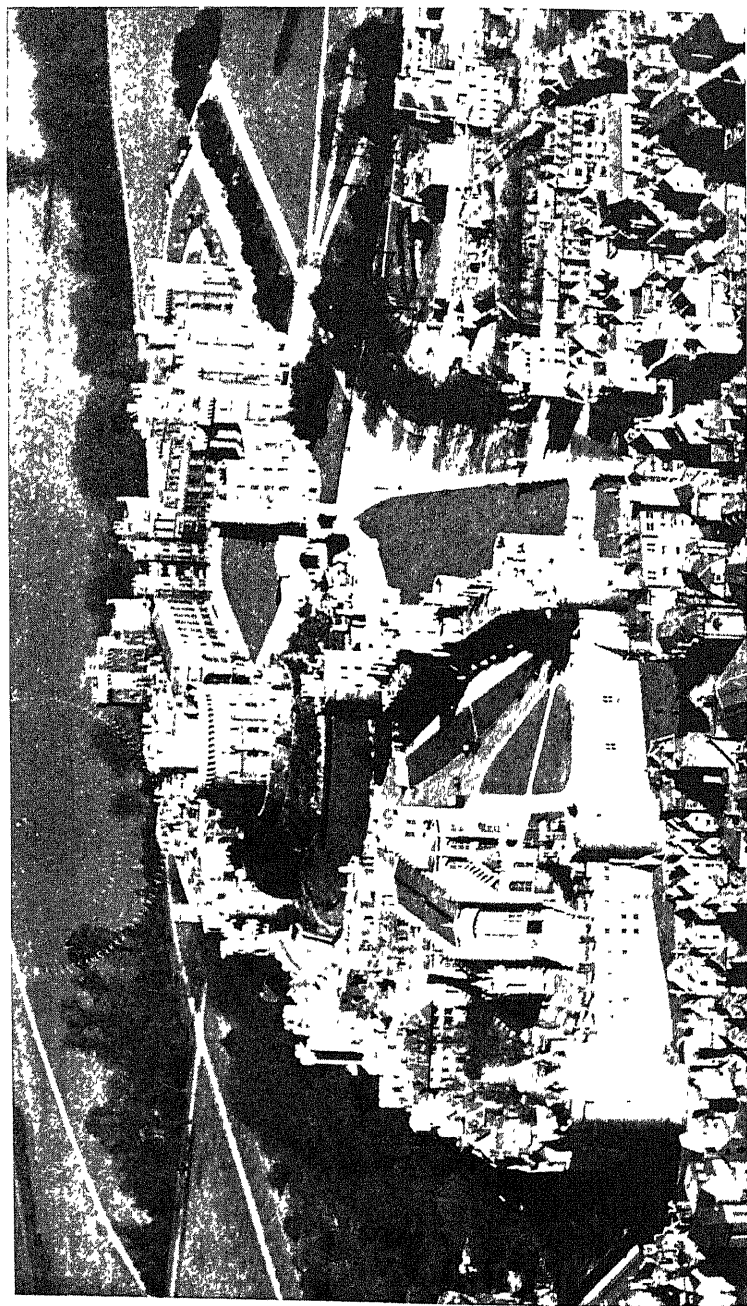
she could not avoid understanding, just as Queen Victoria understood, when she found a copy of her family tree in a book, put there by her governess, to let her know of her inheritance. Princess Elizabeth also knows, by now, that the new white country in the far south is not called Princess Elizabeth's land for nothing. Nor can she be unaware of the significance of seeing her own head on the Newfoundland six-cent postal stamp.

It is ridiculous to try to discover abnormal qualities developing in children before their time. No child is more beastly than the one who reads Gibbon when he should be reading *The Swiss Family Robinson* and no girl is more alarming than the one who is wholly obedient and docile when she should be chock-full of mischief and even a touch of rebellion. Princess Elizabeth is all she should be as a child, with the qualities of which character will be made and the impulsiveness which will grow into personality.

The Duchess of York brought great happiness to every member of the Royal family when she married the Duke. One realised this most sadly when Prince Edward broadcast his melancholy farewell to his people and expressed his envy of the *blessing* which his brother enjoyed and of which he was deprived. It is not, perhaps, too personal to look into the closing years of King George's life and to realise what real happiness he drew from the married life of his son, and the way in which the present Queen was preparing herself, unknowingly, for the weight and brilliance which has come to her so suddenly. Again and again he expressed this happiness; it was real for him from the first day when Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon went to Sandringham, in the January of her betrothal. She became one of his family, because she upheld all the virtues he admired.

Too much virtue is more than any human being can bear, and it would be wrong for the new Queen's subjects to imagine her to be in any sense sanctimonious, superior with goodness, or a blue-stockings. We live at a time





141 Royal Windsor. 1637

when many old shibboleths are thrown away, and we know, in 1937, that the qualities that matter grow out of character, and not from any high-minded superiority over our fellow-creatures. I should like to close this inadequate tribute to Queen Elizabeth by insisting upon the theme of character. Manners, kindness, intellectual interests, and motherhood are no more than glass facets through which this inner light is able to shine. And it is the reason why the story of the happy child at Glamis, the débutante in London, the bride of the Duke of York, the mother of Princess Elizabeth, and the new Queen are one and the same person; the development of an entity, so that the graces which distinguished her when she walked among the wounded soldiers in her father's house are now the Queen-becoming graces which bring serenity into every place she walks.

Some years ago, the present King and Queen stood in a room in Holyrood Palace and held in their hands the withered heart of Robert the Bruce. It is said that they were deeply moved while touching the awful relic, remembering that they are both descended from Scotland's heroic King. The incident grows in importance in our imaginations now, for it awakens many realisations. While Europe suffers change and revolution and anxiety, Britain jogs along contentedly, satisfied with her old habits of thought and behaviour. We are ruled, not by a theorist who sees his achievement through a miasma of poison gas, but by a married pair who represent the courage of an ancient King, who was their common ancestor, and the gentle virtues of domesticity, which are never exciting, but which are always safe and desirable.

Fashions of thought change quickly, and cynicism and independence are the vogue at the moment. But principles of living do not change, and I think that I can find, among the speeches made by King George VI, a passage which one reads in astonishment. It tells all one wishes to know of the core of the man who has

become our King. He spoke at Croydon of the qualities desired in a leader.

“To my mind he must possess three great qualities: personality, sympathy, and above all, idealism. . . . I do not think I need speak to you about personality. . . . Of sympathy I will just say this: its keynote is personal contact and understanding. . . . The third quality of the leader . . . is idealism. Nobody can lead unless he has the gift of vision and the desire in his soul to leave things in the world a little better than he found them. He will strive for something which may appear unattainable but which he believes in his heart can one day be reached, if not by him, by his successors if he can help to pave the way. . . .”

INDEX

(The numerals in *italic* denote the *figure numbers* of illustrations)

- Aberdeen, Lord, 28
 Abergeldie, 13, 47
 Adelaide, Queen, 3
 Admiralty, the, 93
 Afghanistan, 80
 Agra, 79
 Air Ministry, 94
 à Kempis, Thomas, 29
 Albert Memorial, the,
 34
 Albert, the Prince
 Consort, 1-10,
 12-16, 23, 24, 26,
 28, 33, 35, 38, 39,
 53, 55, 59, 90, 3,
 14, 18, 21, 24, 33
 Albert, Prince, and
 Duke of York.
 See George VI
 Alexander, Tsar of
 Russia, 43, 48
 Alexandra, Queen
 (Princess of
 Wales), 27, 38,
 39, 42, 48, 62,
 53, 54, 55, 56, 57,
 58, 62, 77, 131
 Alexandria, 68
 Alfred, Prince, 48
 Alice, Princess, 20, 21,
 49
 Allahabad, 77
 Allen, Lord, 98
 America, Congress of,
 110
 Andes Mountains, 53
 Anne, Queen, 104, 108
 Argentine, the, 82, 83,
 84
 Armistice Day, 69, 75
 Ascot, 73
 Asquith, Mr., 65
 Augusta, Empress of
 Germany, 49, 42
 Australia, 47, 68, 69,
 73, 74, 80, 81, 106,
 107; 97
 Austria, 42, 68, 118
 Austria, Emperor of, 65
Bacchante, 47, 97
 Balliol College, 60
 Balmoral, 10, 11, 13,
 14, 28, 33, 19, 20,
 43, 45, 46
 Banff, 71
 Bantus, 81
 Barbados, 72
 Barker, Mr., 68
 Barker, T. J., 60
 Baroda, 77
 Bavaria, 87
 Beaconsfield, Lord, 23-
 33, 44, 45, 37, 40
 Beaconsfield, Lady, 30
 Beatrice, Princess, 20,
 41, 89
 Bedford, Duchess of, 7
 Belgians, King of the,
 42
 Benares, 77
 Bengal, 77
 Berlin, Congress of, 45
 Bermudas, 75
 "Bertie." *See* Ed-
 ward VII
 Bethany, 37
 Bethlehem, 37
 Bhopal, 78, 79
 Bills of Parliament
 Regency, 8
 Disestablishment
 and Disendow-
 ment of Church
 of Ireland 28
 Public Worship
 Regulation, 30
 Bismarck, 40, 62
 Blenheim, 104
 Boers, the, 80
 Bohemia, 87
 Bombay, 76
 Bowes-Lyon, Lady
 Elizabeth. *See*
 Elizabeth, Queen
 Bradford, Lady, 30, 44
 Breteuil, Marquis de,
 58
 Bricklayers' Arms Sta-
 tion, 55
 Bright, John, 25
Britannia, the, 46, 47
 Bruce, Lady Augusta,
 12, 23
 Brussels, 38
 Buckingham Palace,
 6, 7, 54, 65, 69,
 90, 96, 97, 98,
 101, 111, 15, 16,
 77, 94, 124, 138
 Buenos Aires, 82, 83;
 106
 Burdwan, Maharaja of,
 85
 Burney, Fanny, 111
 Calcutta, 77
 Cambridge, 20, 94, 95,
 99
 Cambridge, Duke of,
 27
 Canada, 71, 91, 92; 96
 Canberra, 97
 Cannes, 58
 Canning Memorial,
 Santiago, 84
 Cape Town, 80
 Carisbrooke, 19, 56
 Carnarvon, 57, 63
 Caroline, Queen, 52

Castries, 75
 Ceylon, 80
 Charles I, 56, 104
 Charles II, 108
 Chaucer, 104
 Chesterfield, Lady, 30
 Chile, 82, 84
 Churchill, Mr., 63
 Clarence, Duke of, 45,
 48; 66
 Clarendon, Lord, 26,
 27, 40
 Coates, Mr., 85
 Coburg, 1, 3, 5, 6, 12,
 15, 16, 19, 35, 90;
 6, 7
 Coldstream Guards,
 67
Collingwood, H.M.S.,
 91, 92, 93
 Cologne, 15; 27
 Constantinople, 48
 Cook, Mr. Thomas, 85
 Coventry, 18
 Cranwell, 93, 94
 Crimea, the, 48
 Cripps, Sir Stafford,
 97, 98
 Croydon, 114
 Crystal Palace, the, 16,
 17; 30
Cumberland, H.M.S.,
 91
 Cumberland, Duke of,
 9
 Curragh of Kildare,
 the, 51
 Curtis - Bennett, Sir
 Noel, 85
 Datchet, 12
 Damascus, 37
 Darbyshire, Mr. Tay-
 lor, 90, 92
 Darmstadt, 32, 43
 Dartmouth, 56, 63, 70,
 91
 David, Prince. *See*
 Edward VIII
 Dead Sea, the, 37

Deakin, Mr. Ralph,
 83
 Dee, River, 10, 11,
 13
 Delane, Mr., 36
 Delhi, 79
 Denmark, 38, 40
 Derby, Lord, 27, 31
 Derby, the, 100
 Dettingen, 91
 Diamond Jubilee,
 1897, 48
 Dilke, Sir Charles, 96
 Disraeli *See* Beacons-
 field, Lord
 Dominion Forces, 67,
 68, 69
 Doorn, 65
 Dover, 107
East Lynne, 36
 Edinburgh, 108
 Edward III, 110
 Edward VII (Prince
 of Wales):
 journey to the Near
 East, 36-8
 betrothal and mar-
 riage, 38-9
 illness, 40-2
 travels, 42-3
 politics, 43-5
 relations with
 grandson, 53-5
 other references:
 19, 27, 35, 46, 57,
 59, 60, 62, 70, 89,
 90, 97; 49, 50, 51,
 52, 54, 57, 59, 60,
 61, 69, 76, 77, 80
 Edward VIII (Prince
 of Wales):
 birth, 52
 childhood, 53-5
 education, 55-7
 travels, 58, 70-84
 Oxford, 59-64
 war, 65-70
 visits to distressed
 areas, 85-6

Edward VIII. (Prince of
 Wales—(*contd.*)
 abdication, 109, 112
 other references, 87,
 89, 90-3, 106,
 110, 69, 70, 78,
 79, 80, 81, 84, 85,
 86, 87, 91, 92, 93,
 95, 96, 97, 98, 99,
 100, 101, 102,
 103, 104, 106,
 107, 108, 109,
 110, 111, 112,
 113, 114, 115,
 117, 118, 119,
 120
 Egypt, 35, 36, 42, 44, 67
 Egypt, Khedive of, 44
Eine Feste Burg ist
Unser Gott, 20
 Elizabeth, Princess,
 103, 104, 111,
 112, 113; 134
 Elizabeth, Queen, 46,
 104
 Elizabeth, Queen
 (Duchess of
 York), 99, 100,
 101, 102, 104,
 105, 106, 107,
 108, 111, 112, 113;
 130, 133, 134
 Ely, Lady, 32
 Epsom Races, 129
 Eton, 103
 Etruscan art, 35
 Euclid, 2
 Ex-Service men, 75
 Falstaff, 12
 Fiji, 72
 Fisher, Lord, 63
 Flanders, 90
 Ford, Mr. Henry, 85
 Fort Belvedere, 116
 France, 13, 42, 44, 56,
 57, 58, 61, 62, 66,
 67, 70, 110, 92
 Frederick William of
 Prussia, 11, 31

Frogmore, 11, 12, 20,
53, 54, 90; 21, 22

Gambetta, Léon, 44

Ganges, 77

Garter, Order of the,
110

George I, 52

George II, 91

George III, 89

George IV, 90, 108

George V (Duke of
York).
early years, 46-8
marriage, 48-51
popularity (war),
64-6
Socialist Govern-
ment, 96, 98
Silver Jubilee, 61,
109
death, 110-11
other references 45,
55, 59, 62, 69, 89,
90, 91, 99, 101,
102, 103, 104,
106, 64, 66, 67,
69, 74, 75, 81, 82,
88, 89, 90, 105,
121, 122, 127,
128, 129, 131,
135, 136, 137

George VI (Albert,
Prince and Duke
of York):
early years, 89-94
Cambridge, 94-6
marriage, 99-102
travels, 105-8
other references:
53, 98, 103, 104,
111, 112, 113, 79,
121, 122, 130,
132, 134, 140

Germany, 8, 12, 42,
49, 62, 63, 64, 65,
110

Gethsemane, 38

Gandhi, 76, 77, 78, 79,
80

Gibbon, 112

Gibbs, Sir Philip, 67

Gladstone, Mr., 23, 26,
28, 29, 30, 31, 32,
49, 51, 52, 58;
36

Glamis, 100, 101, 102,
111, 113

Gloucester, Duke of,
94; 70

Gotha, 5, 6

Grant, Sir Francis,
9

Great Exhibition of,
1851, 11, 16-19,
24; 30

Greig, Wing-Com-
mander, and
Mrs., 95

Grenadier Guards, the,
66, 67, 91

Greville, 7, 8

Grey, Zane 106

Guana, British, 75

Gwalior, 79; 104

Haig, Earl, 92

Hansard, 32

Hastings, 94

Hawaii, 72

Hayter, Sir George,
10, 12

Heidelberg, 62

Henry III Chapel,
Windsor, 24

Henry, Prince. *See*
Gloucester, Duke
of

Hertzog, General, 85

Heydemann, W., 62

Hindustan, 56, 57, 58,
91

Hofmeyer, Mr., 82

Holyrood, 108, 113

Hughenden, 31, 44;
40

Hughes, Mr. W. M.,
74

Hyde Park, 16, 17

Hyderabad, 78

India, 43, 44, 48, 76-
80, 103, 104

Indore, 78

Italy, 67, 68

Italy, King of, 68, 69,
93

Isis, 59

James I, 110

Jammu, 80

Japan, 80

Jenner, Dr., 20, 41

Jerusalem, 37, 38

Jordan, 37

Judea, 37

Jullundur, 80

Jutland, 91, 93, 99

Kaffir minstrels, 81

Kaiser, the. *See*
William II

Karachi, 78, 80

Kensington Palace
2, 24, 5

Kent, Duchess of, 12
13, 14, 16; 11, 2

Kent, Duke of, 75

Kent, Duke of (Prince
George), 117

Kitchener, Lord, 66
92, 93

Kreisler, 65

Lahore, 18, 80

Landseer, Sir Edwin
26

Le Blond, 2

Lee, Sir Sidney, 54

Lehzen, 3

Leopold of Belgium
2, 5, 7, 9

Lesseps, Ferdinand de
42

Liliuokalani, 72

Lincoln, President, 7

Lloyd George, Mr.
65, 70

Logue, Mr., 107

- London, 6, 7, 10, 24,
 41, 42, 43, 54, 69,
 85, 98, 100, 103,
 109, 110, 111,
 105
 Lorne, Marquess of,
 49
 Lorraine, 87
 Louise, Princess, 49
 Lucknow, 77
 Luther, 1

 Macbeth, 100
 MacDonald, Mr. Ram-
 say, 97
 Madras, 78
 Madrid, 18
 Magdalen College,
 President of, 62,
 63
 Malaya, 80
 Mall, The, 42
 Mansion House, the,
 75
 Maoris, the, 47, 73; 98
 Margaret Rose, Prin-
 cess, 134
 Marie, Empress of
 Russia, 131
 Marlborough House,
 46, 48
 Mary, Princess (Prin-
 cess Royal), 100;
 85
 Mary, Queen, 49, 51,
 52, 64, 65, 69, 71,
 102, 103, 104,
 106; 65, 68, 79,
 85, 128, 131, 135,
 136, 137
 Mary, Queen of Scots,
 108
 Mayo, Miss Kath-
 erine, 76
 Mediterranean Sea, 67,
 68
 Melbourne, Lord, 3,
 4, 26, 9
 Midlothian Campaign,
 31

 Mombasa, 105
 Montevideo, 82
 Montreal, 92; 95
 Moiley, Lord, 31
 Mussolini, 65
 Mysore, 78

 Nagpur, 78
 Nairobi, 105
 Nancy, Fiance, 94
 Napoleon, 1
 Nash, Joseph, 8
 Naval Medical Board,
 93
 Nelson, 52
 Nepal, 77, 89
 Newfoundland, 91, 92,
 112
 New York, 71
 New Zealand, 47, 68,
 69, 72, 73, 81,
 106, 107, 108,
 98
 Nicholas II, Tsar of
 Russia, 65; 45
 Nile, 105
 Norfolk, 62
 Northcliffe, Lord, 106
 "Not Forgotten" As-
 sociation, 102
 Nottingham, 97

 O.T.C. (Oxford), 64,
 69
 Occupation, Army of,
 69
 Olga, Grand Duchess
 of Russia, 53
 Olives, Mount of,
 38
 Orpen, Sir William,
 85
 Osborne House, 23,
 30, 33, 36, 56, 63,
 70, 90, 91, 93, 99,
 106, 17, 39, 47
 Oudtshoorn, 80
 Oxford, 59, 60, 61, 62,
 63, 64, 70; 87

 Paddington Station,
 33, 110
 Palestine, 36, 37
 Palmerston, Lord, 9,
 15, 35
 Panama Canal, 72, 75
 Paris, 39, 43, 44
 Patiala, 80
 Paxton, 17
 Peel, Sir Robert, 28
 Pegoud, 63
 Persia, Shah of, 43
 Perth, 74
Peveril of the Peak, 21
 Piccadilly, 103, 111
 "Pilgrims" Dinner,
 108
 Pope, the, 35
 Port Elizabeth, 81
 Portsmouth, 75
 Prince Consort, the.
 See Albert, Prince
 Princess Royal. *See*
 Mary, Princess
 Princess Royal. *See*
 Victoria, Princess
 Probyn, Sir Dighton,
 66
 Prussia, 40, 48

 Rajputs, 11th and 12th,
 79, 82
 Rangoon, 78
 Rawlinson, Lord, 79
 Reinhardtsbrun, 15
Renown, 74
 Rhein, 1, 69; 28
 Rhodes, Cecil, 59
 Richmond Park, 52, 54
 Robert the Bruce, 113
 Roberts, Lord, 53
 Rolls Royce, the first,
 74
 Rome, 30, 35
 Rosebery, Lord, 52, 89
 Rosenau, 1, 16, 19,
 21; 7
 Ross, Sir William C.,
 13
 Rowtor, Lord, 33

Royal Air Force, 93,
94
Royal Family Portraits, 2, 24, 25,
29, 32, 44, 57, 69,
73, 75, 76, 83,
122, 131, 134, 136
Royal Flying Corps,
94
Royal Naval Air
Service, 93, 94
Russia, 42, 45, 48
Russia, Tsars of. *See*
Alexander and
Nicholas

St. George's Chapel,
Windsor, 57, 54
St. Helena, 82
St. James's Palace, 25,
90; 31, 125
St. Paul's, 41, 45, 136
St. Stephen's Gate, 37
Salisbury, Lord, 23, 44
"Sammy," 83
Samoa, 74
San Diego, 72
Sandhurst, 20
Sandringham, 41, 47,
53, 55, 62, 110,
112; 60, 126
Santiago, 84
Sargent, J. S., 101
Scapa, 93
Schleswig - Holstein,
62
Sebastopol, 10
Selfridge, Mr. Gordon, 85
Serapis, H.M.S., 44
Shakespeare, 104
Shaw, Mr. Bernard,
51, 98
Silesia, 87
Snowden, Lord, 97
South Africa, 80, 81,
82; 108, 109
South America, 80, 82,
83, 84, 106
South Sea Islands, 74

Spezia, 68
"Spy," 61, 67
Stanley, Lady Augusta,
26
Stanley, Dean, 36, 37,
39, 46
Stellenbosch, 81
Stevenson, R. L., 74
Stockmar, Baron, 1
Stoke-on-Trent, 18
Storey, Mr., 74
Strathmore, Lord, 101,
102
Stuart, 108
Stuttgart, 63
Suez Canal, 42, 43

Tait, Captain W. E. C.,
92
Teck family, the, 65
The Swiss Family
Robinson, 112
The Times, 36, 39
Thiers, 43
Thomas, Mr. J. H.,
85, 96, 97, 98
Thuringia, 1, 15
Toc H, members of,
83
Toronto, 72
Torrington, Lord, 36
Transvaal, 81
Travancore, Rajah of,
18
Trenchard, Lord, 94
Trinidad, 75
Trinity College, 95
Turkey, Sultan of, 42,
43

Udaipur, 77
United States, 69, 71,
110
"Untouchables," 79

Vaca, Mount, 74
Valparaiso, 84
Versailles, 43
Victoria Memorial, 72
Victoria Nyanza, 105

Victoria, Princess, 11,
19, 31
Victoria, Queen:
betrothal and marriage, 2-6
early married life,
7-13
life in Balmoral,
13-14
journey to Coburg,
15-16
Great Exhibition,
1851, 16-19
Albert's death, 19-
22
relationships with
Ministers, 23-34
the Queen and her
son, 35-6
Empress of India,
31, 44
death, 54
other references 38,
39, 40, 41, 42, 43,
45, 47, 48, 49, 51,
52, 53, 61, 73, 89,
96, 97, 112, 4, 9,
12, 13, 14, 17, 18,
21, 24, 26, 33, 35,
38, 40, 41, 42, 45,
46, 51, 63, 69, 70,
71, 122

Waitemata Harbour,
106
Waldenburg, 101
Wales, Prince of. *See*
Edward VII
Wales, Prince of. *See*
Edward VIII.
Wales, Princess of
See Alexandra
Queen
Walton, J. W., 52
War Office, 92
Warley, 66
Wellington, Duke of,
Wembley, 104
West Indian Islands
91

Westminster, 28, 46,
68, 100, 110; 139

White House, 71

White Lodge, 48, 52,
53, 89, 90, 100,
101; 123

Whitehall, 10, 15, 52,
107

Wight, Isle of, 30, 56;
39

William II, 11, 42, 49,
62, 63, 65

William the Con-
queror, 110

Wilson, President,
71

Windsor, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9,
11, 12, 13, 19, 20,
24, 25, 28, 29, 31,
33, 36, 40, 51,
52, 53, 54, 56, 89,
90, 95, 103, 110,
111, 1, 2, 8, 18,
141

Winterhalter, F. X.,
17, 18, 24, 49

Wolsey, Cardinal,
24

York, Albert, Prince
and Duke of. *See*
George VI

York, Duchess of. *See*
Elizabeth, Queen

York, Duke of. *See*
George V.

York House, 55, 56,
85, 90

Ypres, Battle of, 66

Zambesi, 109

Zeppelin, Count, 63

Zulus, 82

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CONTENTS

	Page
THE BRITISH HERITAGE, PILGRIMS' FACE OF BRITAIN & NEW CENTURY LIBRARIES	3-7
BOOKS ON ENGLAND	3-13
HISTORIC COSTUME	11
SOCIAL HISTORY	9-14
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE	15-19
HISTORIES OF ARCHITECTURE	8, 15, 16
CLASSIC ARCHITECTURE AND THE ORDERS	16-17
RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE	15-16
MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE	15-19
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING	12, 13
GARDENS	5, 17, 18
CHURCH ART	18-19
MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN	18, 21
THE MODERN HOME	21, 22
PERIOD FURNITURE AND DECORATION	19-22
BOOKS FOR COLLECTORS	18-23
FINE AND DECORATIVE ART	20-26
HISTORIC ART	22-26
DESIGN AND ORNAMENT	25-29
MANUALS ON DRAWING, COMPOSITION, ETC.	27-29
ART ANATOMY	28-29
LETTERING	29
ARTS AND CRAFTS	29-31
NEEDLEWORK AND EMBROIDERY	30-31
INDEX	32

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INDEX TO AUTHORS' NAMES

- Agniet, *Art of the Body*, 28
 Allen, *Cheap Cottage*, 19
 — *Small House*, 19
 Anderson & Spiets, *Greece and Rome*, 16
 Anderson, *Italy*, 16
 Armitage, *Art & Understanding*, 31
 Ashby, *Arch. of Rome*, 16

 Bailey, *Spanish Towns*, 16
 Batsford & Fry, *The Cathedrals of England*, 4
 — *The Face of Scotland*, 5
 Beach-Thomas, *Hunting England*, 8
 Bell, *Old Pewter*, 22
 Beauty of Britain, 7
 Blake, *The Heart of Scotland*, 5
 Blake & Hopkins, *Old Furniture*, 20
 Blum, *History of Art*, 21
 Book of Speed, 7
 Brandon-Jones, *Stitch Patterns*, 31
 Brandt, *English at Home*, 6
 Braun, *Child in Art*, 29
 — *Figures, Faces, Folds*, 29
 — *Laughs and Smiles*, 29
 Brereton, *Clothing*, 9
 — *Travel*, 9
 Brown, *The Heart of England*, 5
 Budden, *Gothic Churches*, 17
 Burlington Magazine Monographs, 23
 Burton, *Porcelain*, 22

 Carpenter, *Colour*, 23
 Casteels, *New Style*, 21
 Chadwick, *Fashion Drawing*, 23
 Chancellor, *18th Century*, 10
 — *Regency Period*, 10
 Chinese Art, 23
 Christie, *Samplers*, 30
 — *Cities of Northern Europe*,
 Pictorial Guides, 10
 Clarke, *Circus Parade*, 6
 — *Craftwork Design*, 28
 — *Stitchery Decorations*, 31
 Cohen-Portheim, *Spirit of London*, 4
 Collectors' Library, 22
 Colour, *Art and Life Library*, 9
 Cotterell, *Old Pewter*, 22
 Cox, J. C., *Church Filings*, 19
 — & Ford, *Parish Churches*, 4
 Crompton, *Embroidery Design*, 29
 Crossley, *English Abbey*, 4
 — *Monuments*, 19
 Crossley & Howard, *Church Woodwork*, 19
 Cundall, *Water Colour Painting*, 24

 Day, *Alphabets*, 29
 — *Needlework*, 31
 — *Pattern Design*, 26
 — *Nature and Ornament*, 26
 Dinsmoor, *Greek Architecture*, 15
 Doyle, *Spirit of Ireland*, 6
 Dutton, *Country House*, 3

 Ellwood, *Pen Drawing*, 27
 Eyston, *Motor Racing*, 6
 — *Speed on Salt*, 13

 Fenn, *Abstract Design*, 26
 Fenn & Wyllie, *Furniture*, 22
 Fleming, *Folk Tales*, 7
 Fletcher, *Architecture*, 16
 Flight, *Line Cutting*, 30
 Ford, *Parish Churches*, 4

 Garner & Stratton, *Tudor Architecture*, 15
 Garside, *Furniture*, 21
 Georgian Art, 23
 Glass, *Drawing Design*, 30
 — *Modelling*, 30
 — *Sketching*, 27
 Glazier Ornament, 26
 — *Textiles*, 24
 Godfrey, *English Architecture*, 15
 — *Gardens*, 5
 Gothic, *English House*, 15
 — *Northamptonshire Houses*, 16
 Gregor, *Masks of World*, 14
 Gregory, *Home Making*, 22
 Gröber, *Toys*, 17

 Hake & Button, *Arch. Drawing*, 12
 — *English Quilting*, 25
 Hamilton, *Byzantine Arch'te*, 16
 Hartley, *Medieval Costume*, 11
 — *Countryman's England*, 5
 Hartley & Elhott, *Life and Work*, 11
 Haupt, *Italian Palaces*, 19
 Henneberg, *Old Lace*, 25
 Higgins, *Pen Practice*, 29
 Hooper & Shirley, *Handcraft*, 25
 Horth, *101 Things for Boys, Girls and Little Folks*, 30
 Howard, *Parish Church Styles*, 9

 Jekyll, *Household Life*, 9
 Jones, *Village Homes*, 3
 — *Old Silver*, 22
 — *Touring England*, 18
 Jourdan, *Decoration and Furniture*, 20
 — *Interiors*, 21
 — *Plasterwork*, 21
 Keeley, *Bungalows*, 21
 Kelly & Schwabe, *Costume*, 11
 — *Costume and Armour*, 11
 Knowles, *Dutch Pottery*, 22

 Legacy of England, 7
 Lenygton, *Decoration and Furniture*, 20
 Library of Decorative Art, 20

 Mason, *Bookcrafts*, 25
 — *Ireland's Islands*, 8
 Massingham, *English Downland*, 7
 Mawson, *Garden-making*, 17
 Messel, *Romeo and Juliet*, 20
 Meyer, *Ornament*, 26
 Mulliner, *Decorative Arts*, 20
 — *Nature in Britain*, 7
 Nicolson, *Greater Churches*, 8

 Noble, *Animal Drawing*, 27
 Nott, *Chinese Jade*, 26

 Pakington, *Villages and Hamlets of England*, 4
 Earl, *Living Sculpture*, 29
 Parker, *Wallpaper Drawings*, 24
 Pearce, *Composition*, 27
 Peck, *Embroidery Works*, 31
 Piquan, *History of Art*, 24
 Practical Drawing Series, 27
 Pullbrook, *Country Life*, 9
 — *Countryside*, 9

 Queen Mary (Steamship), 8
 Quennell, *Everyday Life*, 13
 — *Everyday Things*, 12
 — *Greece*, 14
 — *Good New Days*, 10
 Quigley, *Scottish Highlands*, 7

 Raily, *Mod. British Architects*, 18
 Richardson, *Georgian England*, 18
 — *Smaller House*, 15
 — *The Old Inns of England*, 5
 Roe, *Church Chests*, 18
 Rouse, *Old Towns*, 3
 Rowe, *Woodworking*, 30

 Saglio, *French Furniture*, 22
 Salway, *Lead Pencil*, 27
 — *Sketching*, 27
 Salzman, *Tudor England*, 13
 Sawyer, *Everyday Art*, 28
 — *Art in Daily Life*, 28
 — *Perspective*, 28
 — *Sketching*, 28
 Sealy, *Art of Mankind*, 24
 — *Drawing*, 27
 — *Roman alphabet*, 29
 Shand, *Theatres & Cinemas*, 21
 Shore, *Dinner Building*, 8
 — *Touring London*, 13
 Sitwell (S.), *Concensation Pieces*, 21
 Spanish Art, 23
 Speed, *Book of*, 8
 Speltz, *Styles of Ornament*, 26
 Statham, *Architecture*, 15
 Stratton, *Arch. Diagrams*, 16
 — *Orders*, 17
 — *Styles of English Arch'te.*, 1
 Strzawski, *Church Art*, 18
 Symonds, *Needlework*, 25

 Todd & Mortimer, *Modern Decoration*, 22

 Vale, *Seas and Shores*, 3
 Vallance, *Crosses and Lychgates*, 19
 — *English Church Screens*, 18
 Villiers Stuart, *Spanish Garden*, 18

 Ward, *French Architecture*, 16
 Waterhouse, *Story of Arch'te.*,
 Weaver, *Leadwork*, 22
 Wells, *Furniture*, 22
 — *Design in Woodwork*, 25
 Wyllie, *Furniture*, 22
 — *Sheffield Plate*, 22

